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Complete Betrayal Says Badal

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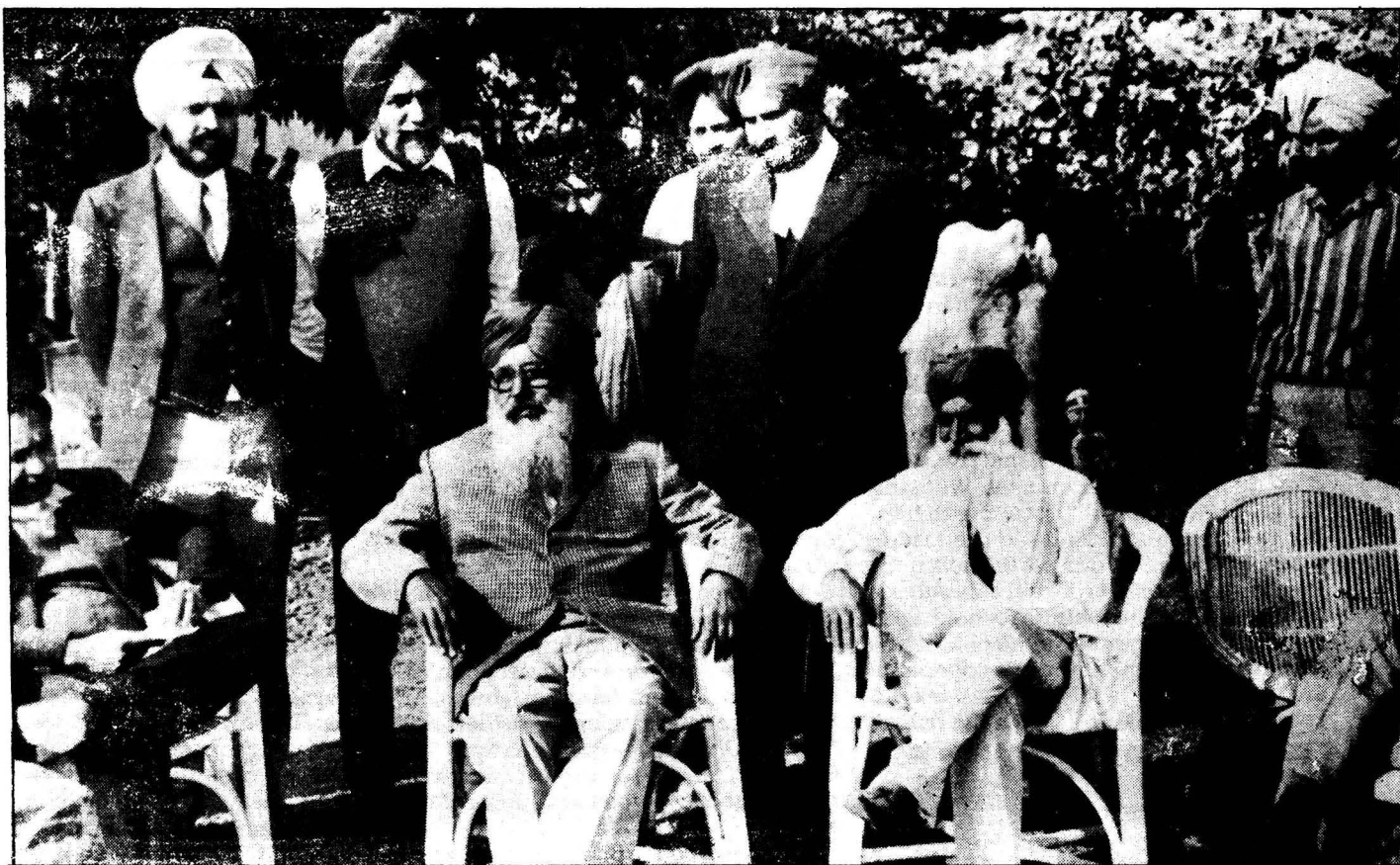
Gazette News)

M Mr. Parkash Singh, United Akali Dal leader and former Chief Minister, after one year's incarceration is a sad and bitter man. In an interview with K.S. Khosla, for Forum Gazette Mr. Badal discusses his view and present situation vis-a-viz the Sikhs and the Akalis.

Q. After your release on December 2 you must have made an assessment of the situation? Is there any hope of a solution of the Punjab problem.

A. The problem has become very complicated. Its ramifications have crossed the national frontiers. If a person falls sick, the doctor should try to know his personal and family history to diagnose his disease correctly. One needs to go in depth and in the case of the Punjab problem, there is need to study events before 1947. The present problem is the result of various political blunders by the Congress and its government before and after 1947. During the period I was in jail, I was all the time thinking what has gone wrong that this brave community of the Sikhs which had most cordial relations with the Hindus and which played such significant role in the Independence struggle and later for the defence of the country are being today branded as traitors.

I have analysed all the events and come to the conclusion that it is the complete betrayal and non-fulfilment of the solemn promises, pledges and decisions



Badal with supporters after his release.

taken by the Congress governments and its deliberate design in not accepting even a single genuine demand of the Akalis which has led to the present impasse. This has been further aggravated by the "invasion" of the Golden Temple by the armed forces, demolition of the Akal Takht, continuous sacrilege of the Sikh shrines, massacre of thousands of Sikhs in Delhi and other parts of the country and not punishing a single culprit so far, unprecedented repression against the Sikhs and killing in fake encounters, introduction of black and draconian laws, abandonment of the rule of law and continuous detention of Sikh youth and religious leaders. The Congress has kept its political interests in view and not the State or national interest. When Master Tara Singh reminded Congress leaders of their promises before 1947, he was dubbed as communal and anti-national and jailed.

The second phase of the great betrayal started with the Punjab Suba movement. All over the country linguistic States were formed as per the Congress assurances but in the case of Punjab, their people had

to launch an agitation. Lakhs of persons went to jail before the Punjab Suba demand was conceded. But even today Chandigarh has not been transferred to Punjab and many Punjabi-speaking areas are left out.

The third phase started with the launching of Dharm Yudh by the Akalis for the acceptance of certain demands. There is not a single demand which is unconstitutional or against any religion. The Akali Dal even suggested solution within the framework of the constitution and laws of the country but the Centre did not abide by the constitution and took executive decisions.

Then came the Rajiv-Longowal accord. I was against it as I knew that the Congress would go back on it. I told Sant Harchand Singh Longowal that the Congress would betray and I have been proved right. Only one clause of the accord is being implemented, i.e., the Sutlej-Yamuna Link Canal, and that is against the interests of Punjab.

Now repression has been let loose on Sikh youth. Draconian laws have been introduced to deprive people of their civil and human rights. An accused

person has now to prove his innocence and the Evidence Act has been amended to make confessions made before police admissible as evidence in court. We all know the image of the police in this country. Sikh youth in detention are taken out and killed and shown as killed while escaping. Things have come to such a pass that 17 boys have filed petitions in High Court praying that they be taken out of jail in fetters, otherwise they will be killed. Some boys have met me and told me horrifying methods of torturing them in jail. Today there is police raj in the State.

I am certain that the Congress will never solve the problem. In any case repression and fake encounters are not

going to solve it.

Q. Have we reached a blind alley. Is there no way out?

A. There is a way out. The Centre must take bold decisions. It should declare a general amnesty, stop all fake encounters, repeal all black laws, punish those responsible for the massacre of Sikhs in November 1984, release and rehabilitate Army deserts. This will not solve the problem but reestablish the Congress's credibility with the Sikh masses. Negotiations can start once this credibility is established, otherwise no one will have a dialogue with the Congress government.

Q. The government has prevented you from joining the

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THE
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The Arrest and After

Prof. Darshan Singh's house arrest so as to prevent him from leading the march to Delhi needs to be seen in the context of the political situation prevailing in Punjab.

When he first announced his intention to lead a group of **satyagrahis** from Fatehgarh Sahib to Delhi, it was treated as a normal kind of event. The Governor of the State went to the extent of being off-handed about it. According to him he was free to undertake an activity like that and there was no question of the state coming into the picture.

In the event, the opposite was done. When it was time for him to leave, he was prevented from doing so. He was confined to the house on the alleged ground that his life was in danger. The truth of the matter is that the Central government, in consultation with the Punjab authorities, came to the conclusion that this march to Delhi could turn into an act of defiance and protest. Prof. Darshan Singh had not set anytime limit. This was to be an indefinite **dharna**. It may have started in a modest kind of way but it had the potential of growing into a full scale confrontation. The Central government did not want this and decided to use its repressive power.

Nobody thought the theory that his life was in danger. He went to the extent of saying that he was prepared to say it in writing that he would go to Delhi on his own risk. But this was the stated reason. The real, unstated reason was that he has to be prevented from mobilising the people in a manner in which he alone could have done it.

Two questions arise here. One is the fact that, as has been noted by a large number of people, the Left parties were permitted to organise a massive rally in Delhi. But Prof. D. Singh was not allowed to do some thing similar. Why this discrimination in favour of one and against the other? If the situation did not warrant mass activity, restraints imposed should have been of a uniform kind. What has happened does not inspire any confidence in the sense of fairness of the Central government.

No less important is the other aspect. When a protest march like that is planned, all kinds of contingencies are taken into account. For example, it should have been foreseen that he could be arrested and the whole thing thrown out of gear. What was planned that in case if the issue had been discussed in advance one did not see much evidence of that planning. Another person was nominated to lead the march mess. Even he was arrested and that was the end of it.

In a matter like this one cannot afford to be casual. If the march could be thwarted in the uneventful manner in which it has been, clearly there is something wrong with the planning of it. When such thing have happened in the past, those were the result of careful planning. It appears that in this case that was not so. This is to be deplored.

Part of the explanation may be the state of demoralisation within the Akali party. The government may have been party responsible for it, but can it be said that the Akali party has behaved with due responsibility and coherence. The answer is in the negative. In the situation which is now unfolding in Punjab, nothing is easier than to blame the Central government or the Punjab administration. To quite an extent both are acting in a manner that they should not have. But does that absolve the Akalis from forging unity in their ranks and placing the common interests above the individual interest of individuals and factions?

It is in this contest that the recent release of P S Badal should be seen. He is a man of considerable experience and public standing, having been the Chief Minister of the state twice he is expected to provide a certain measure of mature leadership. While his detention was wrong and deplorable, it has done this much good that in personal terms he has recovered a good deal of the prestige what he had either lost or was in the process of losing before he was arrested. All that has been forgotten and to some extent at any rate he can start not exactly on a clean slate but with a considerable degree of freedom and autonomy.

How this opportunity is put to use remains to be seen. Broadly speaking, it can be said without much fear of contradiction that his stature today is higher than it was sometime ago. What is more, though the situation is difficult, he is in a unique position to provide leadership.

What is it precisely that he can do? He probably cannot solve the problem. That can be done only if the Centre is interested in solving it. As the month-long satyagrah in Delhi has shown, the Centre is not prepared to respond to even two basic demands—punish the guilty of November 1984 killing and release the innocents of Jodhpur and other jails. The significance of these demands is that unless these two are met, even the first step with regard to the resolution of the Punjab problem would not have been taken. Whatever else it means, one thing is clear. The Centre is not interested in resolving the Punjab problem at this stage. This being so, what is it that Badal can do?

The most important and the most urgent thing that he can do is to overcome the division in the ranks. The existing state of divisiveness is hurting his party and is hindering resolution of the Punjab problem. Once unity is achieved, it would create a situation whereby continued intransigence on the part of the Centre would look more and more indefensible. Uniting behind one leader is thus the need of the hour in Punjab. The only man who answers this description is Badal. If he can achieve it, he would be the man of the hour, otherwise there should be no hesitation in saying that he would have failed the party that he presumes to lead.

Adding Insult To Injury

Amrik Singh

What happened in November 1984 in Delhi and several other places is without precedent in recent history. Even in South Africa, where lawless things happen all the time nothing like this has happened. There have been instances of unprovoked shooting by the police and slaughter of hundreds of people but there has been nothing like what happened in Delhi and elsewhere.

In November 1984 there was a deliberate withdrawal of the forces of law and order and an organised attempt by laming elements to go on burning and killing spree. Without exaggeration, it was an abdication by the State in favour of those goons and gangsters who can be let loose on peaceful citizens in the interests of a political line of approach, teach 'em a lesson. That it led to the killing of thousands of innocents is one thing, that it also led to the undermining of the State apparatus is another which is bound to have a long-range effect. Not many people realize this. In years to come when the state structure ceases to be the firm structure that it is expected to be, some of those people who do not think of tomorrow today will begin to discover for themselves that the November 1984 marked an important stage in the qualitative degeneration of the Indian state. There is so much more that can be said on the subject but it should not be necessary to do so.

In the case of those killed, a compensation of Rs. 20,000/- per head was given to the survivors. To start with, it was Rs. 10,000/- but it was later on it was doubled. In regard to the number of those who were killed there has been some controversy. (The Ministry of Home Affairs admitted in Parliament that the number of persons who had been burnt and killed was a little over 2700. When the Mishra Commission got underway, the Citizens Justice Committee led by ex-Chief Justice C M Sikri, presented a list of 3800 persons along with the names, addresses, venue of the incident and such other details. The matter was then referred to the Delhi Administration. According to the report of the Chief Secretary, the number of person killed in Delhi was over 2700. Earlier it had been said that the total killed was 2700. In other words, there was a difference of between the two figures) 1100. Without going into those details, this much is now officially acknowledged that the total number of those killed was more than 3000.

Apart from the loss of life, there also considerable loss of property. In Delhi alone it had been estimated that this was somewhere around Rs/- 300-400 crores. Some people who had taken out insurance policies got some compensation. Another category got some kind of marginal help to get their business started and so on. But there was yet another category which had been ignored. This

related to those whose properties and household goods were not insured.

Even on the 6th of November, 1984, when a delegation of Delhi Sikhs saw the Prime Minister, this matter was referred to and it was stated that **ex-gratia** payment could be made in such cases also. More than three years have gone by but nothing of the kind has happened. At first the matter was referred to Dhillon Committee. That Committee reported early this year and recommended that those sufferers whose property was not insured should be compensated upto a maximum of Rs. 50,000/-.

The matter was also referred to the Misra Commission. This Committee which reported last year had made a similar recommendation. In fact, both these Committees recommended that the compensation must be paid at an early date.

In February 1987 the Misra Commission's report was accepted by the Government of India. It was also decided unilaterally at that time that the compensation would be paid on an **ex-gratia** basis and not based on the quantum of loss suffered by each individual.

In the Budget Session early this year Lt. Gen. J S Aurora (Retd.) wanted to know what was being done. The reply given to him was that the modalities of payment had yet to be decided. In early November 1987, another Member of Parliament asked the same question. And he was given the same answer: the modalities are yet to be decided. It looked as if it was not serious enough that thousands of people had been burnt alive and killed. Those who had survived had to be denied them the compensation that had been accepted in principle.

On 30.11.1987 Lt. Gen. Aurora made a Special Mention of this issue once again. He was supported by several other members belonging to the Lok Dal CPM and AGSP. One of the members who charged a CPM member with twisting facts was Pavan Kumar Bansal, a Congress-I MP from Punjab. This notwithstanding a few days later Shri Bansal along with two other members, both from the Congress-I from Punjab—Shri H S Hanspal and Smt. Amarjeet Kaur—wrote a letter to the government making out a case for an early decision in the matter.

Lo and behold, there was immediate action on their letter. The modalities which had not been settled for more than a year were settled within a matter of hours and the government made an announcement to the effect that compensation upto Rs. 50,000/- would be paid to those who had not taken out insurance policies. It must be a record of sorts that the government could move so speedily. For three long years nothing had happened. Even high Powered Committees and Commissions had recommended that

compensation be paid but with the kind of callousness characteristic of the government nothing was done and the matter was kept pending.

But such is the magic and the potency in the words of these three Members of Parliament that no sooner did they write than the wheels of action started moving. How wonderful indeed, how exhilarating!

The country could surely do with a few more of such political magicians. All kinds of things are stuck up at various places. It would be marvellous if these three persons with their magic touch could condescend to use their good offices in pursuit of things long since held up for one reason or another. May we make a humble suggestion. According to the Delhi Administration, more than 2700 people were killed in Delhi alone. So far not even a single person has yet been prosecuted for that carnage. Through a series of misadventures, a committee known as the Jain-Banerjee Committee has recommended that one gentleman by the name of Sajjan Kumar who at one time used to be a Member of Parliament be prosecuted. It is an accident that he currently happens to be the General Secretary of the Delhi Congress Committee also. We would not like to suggest a connection between the two facts. After all accidents do happen and this may be one of them.

This gentleman was sought to be only prosecuted. That does not mean the same thing as conviction but even prosecution has been held up owing to all kinds of procedural reasons. May we suggest that these three persons with such extraordinary powers of intervention may write another letter to the government asking for removal of procedural bottlenecks that have arisen and, if necessary, even enact new legislation so that only one person who is sought to be prosecuted is actually prosecuted.

One was not aware of the powers wielded by these three persons so far. Otherwise, one could have made some such suggestion earlier. But that as it may, it is never too late to do a good job. As far as we can judge, this is a job that deserves to be done. But if these three distinguished Members of Parliament belonging to the State of Punjab and to the political party called the Congress-I have a different opinion, we would be glad to have them put forward their point of view for holding a different opinion. For our part, we undertake to publish their letter in full and without the slightest change or amendment.



The Fairfax Enquiry How fair It Was

V P Singh's transfer from Finance to Defence and then his eventual exit from the Cabinet has been one of the more disturbing things in the course of 1987.

When the issue erupted in Parliament, the government got out of the bind by referring the matter to a sitting judge of the Supreme Court. Instead of one judge, eventually two came to be appointed and they have now submitted a report known as the Thakkar-Natarajan Report. Its findings have created a lot of controversy. There are those who praise it and others who condemn it. Not many people have gone into the merits of the case. Indeed not many people have the patience to read even the report in full.

Editorial comments of newspapers are a pointer to what people think. Without taking a position in the matter out the moment, we reproduce below some of the opinions expressed by editors and columnists. These could have been put into a certain pattern. But we have resisted that tendency and would like the readers of judge for themselves.

The Times of India with title "A Murky Affair" suggests the Thakkar-Natarajan commission, popularly known as the Fairfax inquiry commission, has fulfilled the task assigned to it as well as it possibly could in the circumstances. For practical purposes it is as pointless to argue that it should have abided by the provisions of the Commission of Inquiry Act in respect of evidence as to suggest that it should have sought to establish clearly the responsibilities of the principal actors in the Fairfax drama—Mr. V.P. Singh, Mr Vinod Pande, Mr Bhure Lal, Mr Nusli Wadia and Mr. S. Gurumurthy, financial adviser to the *Indian Express*. Whatever procedures it might have adopted, the result could not have been very different for the obvious reason that it was just not possible in this case to establish some of the critical facts beyond reasonable doubt. While it has, for instance, been widely assumed that the story begins with the series of articles by Mr Gurumurthy in the *Express* in early 1986 exposing the alleged irregularities by Reliance Industries, a thorough probe must also seek to establish the background to this campaign. But surely that would be beyond the capacity of any agency or commission unless Mr Ramnath Goenka and/or Mr Gurumurthy were prepared to cooperate. And surely it would be absurd for anyone to expect them to cooperate if that in any way incriminated them. Similarly, while it has been almost universally accepted that this campaign was the result of business rivalry between Reliance Industries headed by Mr Dhirubhai Ambani and Bombay Dyeing headed by Mr Nusli Wadia, one can only speculate about the factors which could have led Mr.

Ramnath Goenka, chairman of the *Express* group, to side with the latter. And how can anyone in all conscience be sure that the inter-corporate war did not have political ramifications from the very beginning or that it did not acquire one at some stage? Plainly, we are in the dark on these and many other relevant points of fact and Mr Justice Thakkar and Mr Justice Natarajan could not possibly have helped us in this matter.

By and large we Indians tend to take a surface view of matters. Most of us have no experience either of engaging in conspiracies or unravelling conspiracies. Thus even the conspiracy theories some of us put forward on occasions are rather simple-minded. This approach is bound to influence the general response to the commission's report. This tendency is certain to be reinforced by the generally low credibility of the government, the widespread belief in the personal integrity of Mr V.P. Singh and the officials chosen by him for his war on leading business houses in general and Reliance in particular, and the sympathy for the *Indian Express* which recent official actions against it have produced in certain quarters. Even so it must be said that the commission has drawn attention to certain facts and possibilities which should not be ignored by anyone who is genuinely interested in trying to find out to the extent possible, what actually happened in the Fairfax affair. At the end of the exercise, we may draw blank. But that would be a different proposition.

The Sunday Observer in its editorial titled "Back to the Beginning" Points

TWO sitting judges from the highest court in the land, carefully chosen by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi for their known affinities to the ruling party, have delivered an inquiry report with findings entirely as they were expected to be. So pleased was the New Delhi regime with the conclusions reached by the Thakkar-Natarajan commission and submitted to the government nearly a fortnight back, that it wasted no time in tabling it in Parliament last Wednesday and announcing that it had accepted the findings in toto. As was also to be expected, the former Finance and Defence minister, V P Singh—against whom the terms of reference of the Commission were heavily loaded—was quick to condemn the report as a "monument of injustice" and has dared the government to prosecute him, "if it had the guts and thought there was any truth" in the findings of the Commission.

The Commission's report has attracted a lot of fire from many directions, both for what it has found and for what it has failed to unearth or not looked into at all. Justices, Thakkar and

Natarajan have taken V P Singh and the bureaucrats under him in the Finance ministry severely to task for grossly ignoring procedural requirements.

Ironically, however, they have left themselves open to the very same charge. Section 8B of the Commissions of Inquiry Act mandates that any person likely to be "prejudicially affected" by an inquiry be given an opportunity to defend himself and cross-examine the evidence against him. Of the lot who have been indicted by the commission—V P Singh, former Finance secretary, Vinod Pande, the former director of the Enforcement department under the Finance ministry, Bhure Lal, Textile magnate Nusli Wadia and the financial advisor to press baron Ramnath Goenka, S Gurumurthy—only Wadia was served notice under sec 8B. V P Singh has openly charged that he and the officials under him were "deliberately" not called for fear that it would "raise issues of great personal embarrassment to the Prime Minister."

The commission castigates Bhure Lal for engaging the services of Fairfax without checking its antecedents and jeopardising the security of the nation in the process. Gandhi himself has gone on record for blaming Singh for hiring ex-CIA agents (Fairfax staff). But it is not at all clear how the nation was endangered by engaging Fairfax, considering it was hired merely to supply not to receive, information on the alleged economic offences of Reliance.

By choosing to restrict the terms of the inquiry, Gandhi not only made justices Thakkar and Natarajan witting or unwitting prisoners of those narrow boundaries, but in his refusal to include certain crucial issues within the terms, he has effectively robbed even the issues listed, of their legitimacy.

Arun Shourie writing in *Indian Express* suggests that the inference is obvious. He questions the very motive of the commission expressing that with their report on the Fairfax matter, M.P. Thakkar and S. Natarajan have joined the ranks of P.D. Kudal and Ranganath Mishra—that is, of commissioners who have brought the very institution of Commissions of Inquiry into contempt. In conducting the inquiry and in writing the report they have, of course, functioned merely as commissioners—they invariably and insistently exempted themselves during the hearings from what would have fallen to their lot as judges to decide—but the fact that they are sitting judges of the Supreme Court makes the contempt they have brought on Commissions of Inquiry all the greater. That fact also compounds the injustice they have inflicted on persons whose reputation and honour they have besmirched without evidence, on persons who are facing trial and on whose built

not only have these two sitting judges of the Supreme Court pronounced, but on whose guilt they have pronounced without so much as hearing them.

The hearings, the record, and most of all their report shows that these two commissioners have:

- * Violated-wantonly, to use one of their favourite words—the statute under which they were to function, as well as settled law and precedent;
- * Suppressed facts that were brought one the record to them;
- * Prevented witnesses from putting to them facts which were central to the issues they were examining but which would have blown the miasma which, it is even clearer in retrospect than it was during the hearings, they were out to conjure up;
- * Distorted what in spite of them was put to them;
- * Smeared reputations without evidence;
- * Adopted a method of weighing evidence for which only one word is apt—that it is perverse.

These facts should be sufficient to destroy the report—and I do hope that the obvious way will be taken to have the courts examine the report. But in spite of their exertions their thesis—as against their adjectives—will not help the government. It falls by its contradictions—contradictions which the commissioners just could not have ironed out without damaging what the government itself has been proclaiming.

In contrast to this the *Hindustan Times* in editorial "Indictment" suggests Mr V.P. Singh has only himself to blame for the Thakkar-Natarajan commission's severe indictment of him for his role in the Fairfax affair. Either he was not cautious enough or he had deliberately violated the basic norms of administration. The findings of the commission suggest the latter. The result is that the means which he and his most trusted officers in the Finance Ministry had adopted to unearth the illegal funds held by Indians and Indian companies abroad have recoiled on them. The engagement of Fairfax, a US detective agency, by the Finance Ministry under the stewardship of Mr V.P. Singh has been criticised on several grounds. The thrust of the criticism is that the appointment of a foreign agency was not "consistent with the 'security of India'". It

was certainly a grievous error on the part of the Finance Ministry that it had entrusted a foreign agency with a delicate and serious task. Fairfax and its chief Mr Hershman are by no means friends of India. Considering that Fairfax employs ex-CIA officers how could Mr Hershman be trusted with confidential files and secret information? There were, however, wheels within wheels. The commission has pointed out that Mr V.P. Singh was not aware of the engagement of Fairfax and the modus operandi was left entirely to the then Director of Enforcement, Mr Bhure Lal who, in turn, was acting on the advice of Mr Gurumurthy of the *Express* group of newspapers and Mr Nusli Wadia, Chairman of Bombay Dyeing. In short, Mr V.P. Singh did not exercise even the minimum discretion and caution expected of the country's Finance Minister.

The Tribune has a warning to offer to all concerned. In *Fair (Fax)* Reports it suggests JUDICIAL commissions of enquiry can occasionally become double-edged weapons. This must be the trueful realisation of the many Opposition stalwarts who vociferously demanded a thorough probe into the Fairfax affair and now find themselves on the weak side of the barricade. The Thakkar-Natarajan Commission has not only cleared the Prime Minister and his Cabinet colleagues of any wrongdoing but has, in the process, castigated Mr V.P. Singh and two senior bureaucrats for violating elementary procedures and practices. More, the report graphically describes the role played by captain of the private sector and his Sancho Panza (with distant links with a newspaper) in an act of dubious match-making. The millionaire mill-owner had nudged one of the key officials of the Finance Ministry to strike up a liaison with a US detective agency in the name of digging up secrets of a rival textile tycoon. In the event, nothing tangible came the official way; what came was a bucketful of scorn from the two Supreme Court Judges. This, then, is the most serious and profoundly disturbing aspect of the commission's findings. How come an industrialist, with a blunt axe to grind, was able to rope in the services of the senior men in the Ministry to do dirty work for him?

संचेतना

'संचेतना'
उपहार में दीजिए।

किसी भी शुभ अवसर पर
अपने प्रियजनों को

The Sikhs are more sinned against than sinning

The Sikh dilemma

K.R. Malkani

PROPAGANDA, Goebbels had said, can make anything popular, even death. And so it does. Not a day passes but extremists kill innocents, and policemen kill 'suspects' in 'encounters'. Nobody pauses to consider that, while extremists are criminals to be dealt with according to the law, it is no business of the police to shoot up people on mere suspicion, in encounters that may be more fake than real. Murder has become as routine as the crowing of cocks.

More. Even as, for the average Indian, every white man is 'Angrez', every other Keshadhari Sikh is a 'terrorist'. Not many of us realise that, a whole lot of terrorists have got themselves clean-shaved, to avoid automatic suspicion. But too many of us view every Sikh with suspicion. And the impression is widespread that, in the Punjab, "Sikhs are killing Hindus" and that, therefore, Sikhs are bad, dangerous, anti-national.

However, the actual situation is not all that simple. For one thing, newspaper headlines apart, there is not any the less violence in Bihar and Andhra, than in the Punjab. For another, incredible as it may sound, more Sikhs than Hindus have been killed in the Punjab violence during all these years—whether it was before Operation Bluestar, during that operation, or after. (Incidentally, why call it 'Bluestar'? Will not 'Blackstar' be more appropriate?) Though agent provocateurs have killed bus-loads of Hindus—and even a man like Gen. Viadva—in an obvious bid to provoke Hindus into killing Sikhs, and thus generating enough bad blood to create Khalistan—Hindus, even in overwhelmingly Sikh villages in the Punjab, continue to live in peace. There have been cases where some Hindu families have planned to move out for purely personal or business reasons, but the local Sikhs have successfully persuaded them to stay on, to avoid giving anybody the impression that their migration is due to any sense of insecurity.

While the Sikh masses—as distinguished from the terrorists—have maintained their sanity, the Government has often lost its cool. The way it caused thousands of Sikhs to be slaughtered in Delhi in 1984, was something to be seen to be believed. I was in Pakistan for six months after partition; and I did not see so much violence even at a time like that—and in a place like that. The sack of Hindus in Karachi cost about 200 lives; the sack of Sikhs in Delhi cost about 3,000 lives.

The Sikhs are too proud to talk of their property losses; but these were immense. At the BJP National Executive meeting at the time, Madan Lal Khurana, Delhi BJP President, put Sikh property losses in Delhi at about Rs. 300 crores. Other

states gave their own reports. Pyarelal Khandelwal, MP, reported the violence in Madhya Pradesh, but he did not give an assessment of property losses. During lunch break, I asked him why he had not given the same, and he said: "Nobody would have believed it". He said it was something like Rs. 400 crores. It was indeed incredible.

Sinned

It is clear the Sikhs have been at least as much sinned against as sinning. This is not to exonerate the Sikh leadership of its share of responsibility for the problem that is Punjab today. Their calls for 'Rasta Roko', 'Rail Roko', 'Nehr Roko' and 'Constitution Jalao', created an atmosphere of confrontation and conflict. But their provocation had also been grave. When the Congress put up their political ally, Bhindranwale, to make extremist demands on behalf of the Sikhs, the Akali leadership had no choice but to make equally extremist demands—or lose their following to the Bhindranwale-Congress camp!

Nor did their sorrows begin with the Frankenstein called Bhindranwale. Partition had hurt Sikhs more than anybody else; full fifty per cent of them lost their all in West Punjab and became refugees. (Muslims were also divided 50-50 between India and Pakistan, but then they had asked for Partition—and the Sikhs, and Hindus had not. After Partition, the Sikh academicians proposed Punjabi, written in both scripts, Devnagri and Gurmukhi, as the State language of Punjab. It was the Congress-Arya Samajist academicians who refused, and insisted on "Only Hindi". Later, under the same influence, Punjabi Hindus declared Hindi, and not Punjabi, as their mother tongue, to the intense irritation of the Punjabi-loving Sikhs. In vain did Shri guruji golwalkar of the RSS plead with them, not to disown their mother tongue in such an irresponsible manner.

It is true enough, as British Intelligence had noted well before Independence, that the Sikhs have "a wind in their head". But this could easily happen to a fighter-community on the border, long pampered by the British. It is also true that men like Khushwant Singh have been saying that Sikhism is closer to Islam than to Hinduism to the pained surprise of Hindus. But the right response to political mavericks like him is not to lose patience, but to ask: "If you are indeed closer to Muslims, why didn't you go to Pakistan?" Also, Sikh complaints about this injustice or that, could be irritating, when everybody knew that they were doing very well. But was that not a consequence of our pseudosecularism, which puts the minorities on a pedestal, with expectations of special treatment? And as for loose talk of Khalistan, Pakistan is not the only one to aid and abet it;

encouragement has also come from Communists, who think that India is not one nation but many nations

S.G.P.C.

Today we rightly resent the SGPC acting as a State within the state with a budget of crores. But who is responsible even for that? The British Act on the subject left 90% of a Gurdwara's income with the local Sikh Sangat; only 10% was sent up to SGPC for general administration and supervision. It was the Congress Government after Independence that amended the law and put all Punjab Gurdwaras' incomes in the hands of the SGPC, giving it immense income and the patronage and political clout that go with it. Indeed Congress has taken so much undue interest in Gurdwara politics that it got Sanjiva Reddy, as President of India, to issue an ordinance, removing the minimum matriculation qualification for the office of Delhi Gurdwaras Committee President—just to enable a non-matriculate Sikh Congress-man to take that office!

When the Badal-Tohra group defeated the pro-Congress group in SGPC elections last year, both Badal and Tohra were packed off to jail! What kind of democracy was that? Awards and Agreements have been violated with reckless abandon. In 1976, a Central expert committee allocated a certain volume of river waters to the Punjab but Mrs Gandhi amended that award in favour of Haryana, on the insistence of Bansilal! In 1985, Rajiv Gandhi signed an Agreement with Akali Dal—and then failed to implement it. No doubt that Agreement was quite misconceived: the PM had no right to allot Chandigarh to Punjab, without ascertaining the wishes of the local people; and he had no business to apportion river waters, without consulting the other concerned states of Haryana and Rajasthan. But can a PM make a commitment in haste and then renege on it at leisure?

On top of this, every time the Akalis have come to power in the Punjab—whether in 1967, 1977 or 1985—Congress has used its position at the Centre to topple it or dismiss it. In the light of all these things, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the Sikhs have been more sinned against than sinning. And yet the popular impression remains that it is the Sikhs who are unreasonable. Clever propaganda can make anything popular—even blatant lies.

While all this propaganda about the Sikhs danger to the unity of India helped the Congress to frighten the Hindus into voting for it in 1985 as never before, it has had a whole range of adverse consequences for the country: the Sikhs as a community have been defamed; for the first time in history, a certain feeling of

It is clear the Sikhs have been at least as much sinned against as sinning. This is not to exonerate the Sikh leadership of its share of responsibility for the problem that is Punjab today. (They)...created an atmosphere of confrontation and conflict.

alienation has overtaken Hindus and Sikhs; the economy of the Punjab has been badly hurt. Even more serious, Punjab, the sword-arm of India, has been weakened. What is votes for politicians, can be disaster for the country.

When ugly noises are heard from the Punjab—or from anywhere else—it is natural for

the Indian people to react strongly; we have been so hurt by disunity or *a-sangathan* in history, that we cannot afford to take any threats to national integrity lightly. But in this situation it is the task of the Indian Intellectual to sift facts from propaganda, to speak the truth as he sees it and to ensure that we do not over-react.

Complete Betrayal

Continued from page 1

Q. The government has prevented you from joining the "march for justice" planned by Prof. Darshan Singh Ragi, acting jathedar of the Akal Takht. How do you propose to bring justice to those in detention and bring to book the guilty of the November killings?

A. We have called a meeting of M.L.A.s and M.P.s of UAD in Chandigarh on December 18. We will chalk out our next programme there. We will go on agitating peacefully. It was to be a peaceful march. No political slogan was to be raised. The Left parties which want the Prime Minister to resign have been allowed to agitate in Delhi but we cannot. It seems there are separate laws for the Sikhs.

Q. Obviously you cannot achieve your objective without unity in the Akali Dal. What are you doing to bring about this unity?

A. I am always in favour of panthic unity. I have already met some leaders in this connection. We are planning district conferences of Akali workers to acquaint them with the facts of the situation. As regards differences in UAD, it is our family matter and the rift between Gapt. Amrinder Singh and Mr. Ujjagar Singh Sekhwan has been almost patched up.

Q. What about unity with the Akali dal (L) led by Mr. Surjit Singh Barnala?

A. There are some fundamental issues and principles involved in this. As you know Mr. Barnala was excommunicated in the wake of the police raid on the Golden Temple in April 1986 when he was the Chief Minister. Then the Akali Dal (L) is also, being accused of making a sell-out of Punjab's interests. It was because of these we broke away from the party and formed UAD.

Q. What are your comments on the Centre's proposal to pass legislation to separate religion from politics?

A. It seems the Congress leaders do not know Indian history. When was religion separated from politics? Even today Ramayana is being depicted on TV. What is the central message of this great

epic of our history? What Dharma is supreme and not politics. Religion put to good use will cleanse the Indian politics today which is becoming dirtier and dirtier each day.

Q. What about those who are killing innocent persons in Punjab and outside in the name of religion.

A. I am against all kinds of killings either by individuals or by the State.

Q. How can terrorism be ended?

A. With love and understand. The causes which led to terrorism must be removed. No one talks about removing those causes.

Q. Are you in favour of fresh elections to the Shromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee?

A. Yes. They are long overdue.

Q. You say that the Rajiv-Longowal accord is dead. Are you in favour of a new accord and starting a dialogue with the Centre?

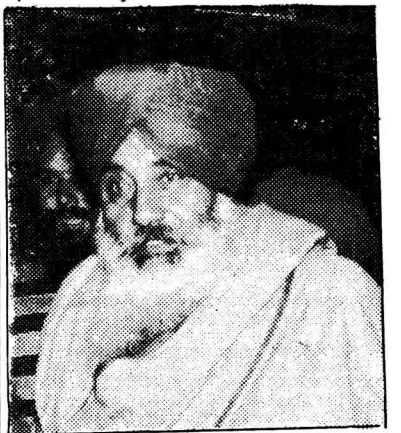
A. There is no question of a new accord and a dialogue. The Congress must first establish its credibility.

Q. Can a lasting solution be found with Mr. Gurcharan Singh Tohra in jail?

A. I have already said there should be a general amnesty for all detained in jails.

Q. Your views on the demand for Khalistan by militants.

A. I can only talk about my party and its programme. Our agitation will always remain peaceful. We are committed to the implementation of the Anandpur Sahib resolution and we will go on agitating for it peacefully.



Democratic movement can only solve Punjab problem

The vexed Punjab problem complicated by vested interests can only be solved by the people organised into a democratic movement.

As a prerequisite for this, "black laws" enacted to control "communal terrorists" must be repealed, suggests "a report to the nation" prepared by the All India Federation of Organisations for Democratic Rights (AIFODR).

The 95-page titled "Punjab—people fight back" said that the "black laws" enacted on the excuse of controlling the situation in the state failed to check the terrorist mode of operation but restricted the open activities of the democratic forces".

Democratic institutions in the state were under a two-pronged assault by communal terrorists, and rising authoritarianism of the state machinery, it said.

The report, which referred to terrorists as "communal Khalistanis" said "Khalistanis have named the communists among their main enemies". Several members of various Marxist-Leninist groups, the Communist Party of India (CPI) and Communist Party of India (Marxist) have been killed by Khalistanis".

The report was prepared by 10 member all-India fact finding committee comprising renowned academicians, literateurs, lawyers and social workers, after meeting a cross-section of people, trade union leaders and politicians during its statewide tour.

The members of the committee, headed by Mr. Gayatri Singh, an advocate from Bombay, were Sahitya Akademi award winner Sujana Singh, Prof K. Puri from Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Prof Jagmohan Singh and Mr. Mohinder Singh Sandhu, general secretary and president respectively of the Punjab unit of AIFODR, Mr. C. Bhaskar Rao and Mr. M.V. Krishnaiah, both representatives of the Organisation for Protection of Democratic Rights, Andhra Pradesh, Mr. Antony Samy, secretary Lokshahi Hak Sanghatana, Maharashtra, Mr. Sushil Ray, organising secretary Sangathan, Orissa and Mr. Girish Srinivasan, a journalist from Bombay.

The report pointed out that contrary to the general impression, both communities were attacked by the Khalistanis. The Khalistanis being a reactionary force in the state, are trying to exercise authoritarian control over people's lives. They enjoy the backing of smugglers, certain landlores and several political parties and terrorise Hindus and Sikhs alike who defy the "fascist dictates of the Khalistanis".

Tracing the background of the Punjab problem, the report said "it is an extension of the divide and rule policies followed by the British rulers in last century and further

pursued by the ruling elite of the independent country".

Electoral games of the main political parties like the Congress, Akali Dal and Bhartiya Janata Party raised "diversionary communal issues and gave a communal turn to such issues like distribution of river waters, settlement of boundary claims, return of Chandigarh, and status of the Punjabi language", the report said.

The Khalistanis are least interested in the settlement of issues like release of innocent detenus and punishment to those guilty in the November 1984 riots. "They want to trigger mass communal killings and division of society on communal lines", it added.

The report observed that "the Centre's role in playing electoral games with Chandigarh, boundary claims, the river waters, the detenus issued and the Delhi riots inquiry has certainly aggravated the communal situation in the state".

However, the report noted that despite the terrorist and the state machinery's "anti-people actions" Hindus and Sikhs were still maintaining harmonious relations which was attributed to the strong cultural bonds between both communities.

The report observed that "there is greater tension in the cities where communal organisations of both communities confront and derive justification from each other.

The "seizure" was strongly criticised by Opposition leaders and newsmen. Since the session of the State Assembly was nearing, the Government entrusted the promised enquiry to then the Chief Secretary, who was later on September 1 was appointed Chairman of the State Public Service Commission on his retirement.

On the basis of his report, the Chief Minister read out a suo moto statement in the State Assembly on September 10 saying that a "sensitive" intelligence report had been received on August 19 "about the possibility of certain terrorist posters being received in Shimla and that these posters were likely to be packed inside newspaper bundles brought by taxis from Chandigarh and Jalandhar to the State capital.

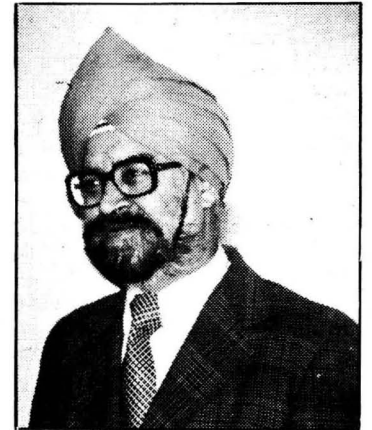
The newsmen were not satisfied and they appointed a seven-member "fact finding committee" consisting of senior journalists on September 12. This was the first time in the history of Himachal Pradesh that newsmen had to constitute their own committee to enquire into such a matter.

The Assembly session was their on. In order to pre-empt the Opposition leaders from raise this issue in the House, a news report was "planted" in all news papers that two groups of "clean shaven" terrorists had "infiltrated" into the State to "assassinate" political leaders and indulge in subversive activities.

Notwithstanding stray incidents of violence in certain parts of the State in reaction to events in Punjab, the people of this State had been maintaining communal harmony.

Award for Jeet

Shri Gurmukh Singh Jeet has been selected for this year's award of Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad, Calcutta, for his novel 'IK Hore Suraj'. The award ceremony will take place on the 2nd January 1988 at Calcutta



followed by a seminar in which local and other writers will take part. This award is called 'Kayya Trust Award' and the awardee is presented with Rs. 11,000/- and a citation. This Novel, published in 1983, has been written against the backdrop of Maharashtra and the Western Ghats. The life story of a Chitpavan dancer has been attached out in this work. Last year this award was given to the distinguished Punjabi Short Story writer, Shri Kartar Singh

Shri Gurmukh Singh Jeet is a well known Punjabi Writer and has so far published two books of criticism, eight collections of short stories and four novels. He also translated some world classics like David Copperfield and Emile Zola's Germinal. Several of his works have been translated in English, Hindi Gujarati, Sindhi and other languages.

FIR against BSF men in Patiala

PATIALA, December 5: An F.I.R. has been lodged against some Border Security Force personnel by Mr Darbara Singh Seona, general secretary of the Patiala district (rural) "Unified" Akali Dal jatha, at the Ghagga police station in connection with the killing of two workers, Mr Gurcharan Singh and Mr Mohinder Singh, on Wednesday.

Mr Seona told newsmen here yesterday that the trouble at Ghagga arose when a contractor of the Food Corporation of India, engaged workers

of Patran Mandi, ignoring the workers of Ghagga, for some loading work. The latter protested and sat on dharna on the road.

Contending that the dharna was peaceful, he alleged that the BSF personnel opened fire on them, killing two workers and inflicting injuries to at least 12 others. Mr Seona said the people of Ghagga had formed a "Sangharsh samiti" to get justice. The people also sat on dharna at Ghagga on Thursday to press their demand for the arrest of the guilty BSF men.

Throttling the Press in HP

SHIMLA, Nov 5—The freedom of the Press is in peril in Himachal Pradesh.

If newsmen in Punjab are threatened with dire consequences by terrorists for not toeing their line, their colleagues working in Himachal are intimidated by political leaders, especially certain ruling Congress (I) leaders.

Journalists representing various newspapers and news agencies are functioning both at the State capital here and at different district headquarters, barring the tribal belt of Kinnaur and Lahaul Spiti. By and large all newsmen are docile, but they are also a divided lot.

Since there is neither any hectic political activity or any law and order problem, the newsmen mainly depend on handouts issued by the State Public Relations Department and various other State organisations.

The Himachal Government provides furnished accommodation and extends the facility of free travel in HRTC buses to all accredited correspondents. In turn, it expects that no report against its interests will be filed or published.

The Chief Minister, "Raja" Virbhadra Singh, who belongs

to an erstwhile princely State of Himachal, likes only praise, it appears, and cannot tolerate adverse adverse comments. He cannot tolerate fair and healthy criticism by even the Opposition. Any newsman who dares to file any report against the Chief Minister's interests, runs the risk of earning his wrath. Sometimes the Chief Minister himself dials a newsman and hands out veiled threats.

Often newsmen succumb to his authority. Those trying to resist the pressure, are put in trouble. The accreditation of at least two working journalists has been cancelled on flimsy grounds. Certain correspondents and their Editors have been hauled up in various courts on fabricated charges.

Instead of maintaining cordial and friendly relations with the local newsmen, Mr Virbhadra Singh tries to win over Editors and News Editors by showering them with favours or treating them as "State guests" during their or their families' visits to Himachal. Ever since he took over the reins of the State on April 8 in 1983, his Government has been spending an average of Rs.8,000 per month on the

From H.S. Bhanwer

entertainment of Editors, News Editors and other visiting journalists. Even a Jalandhar-based college lecturer who is an influential compere of Doordarshan programmes was treated as a "State guest" during his visits to Himachal along with his family and friends, which evoked a strong reaction from Opposition leaders. The matter even figured in the State Assembly.

Certain Shimla-based journalists have very "closed" relations with the Chief Minister and always keep an eye on his "interests". One of such journalist, who claims "family relations" with him, wields considerably influence over the State administration, next only to the Chief Minister, it is said.

A recent instance of gagging the Press is evident from the "seizure" of all newspapers published from Chandigarh and Jalandhar on August 21, merely because these were carrying a report on an all-party rally held here on the previous day to condemn the "brutal lathi charge" on peasants who were "peacefully" demonstrating here on August 19 in support of their demand for a remunerative seep port price for apples.

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On the Occasion of Guru Gobind Singh's Birth Anniversary

Hark : O Khalsa Guru Gobind Singh Beckons you

Bhagwant Singh Dalawari

The blessings of Guru Gobind Singh are countless, but the most striking among them is the creation of the Khalsa, the bringing up this creation and the creator's total merging therein. There is complete harmony in the two expressions: KHALSA-IN-GURU and GURU-IN-KHALSA. These terms almost envelope the concept of God-in-Man, because we believe that the Creator the Lord cannot be visualised as separate from His creation. The Guru and the Khalsa take on the most glorious combination not only in terms of what Guru Gobind Singh himself said and did but also as the attestation of Guru Granth Sahib:

"Guru Sikh, Sikh Guru hai, eko Gur updes chala" (The Guru and the Sikh are interchangeable if the Sikh genuinely continues to preach the Guru's commands).

Before I lament the fact that we have almost disowned Guru Gobind Singh by our actions, I wish to assert in his own words the hopes he had set on his offspring.

Defending the Chamkaur Garhi was Ajit Singh, among others, with Guru Gobind Singh. Ajit Singh is known as BABA and Sahibzada. But the Guru treated him just like any other Sikh. In Bhai Vir Singh's narration, when a Sikh pleads with the Guru not to send Ajit Singh because he is his son, the Guru questions the one who offers to go in stead: "Are you not my son?" Let me touch on the delicacy of the Guru's affection and dependence-in-love on his Khalsa. Both when his sons had not yet been martyred and after their martyrdom, the Guru placed the crown of his "son" on all of us. Look what he said, when, in thanking the Almighty for the grace to sacrifice all the four sons, he answered his wife thus: **IN PUTRAN KE SIS PAR VAR DIE SUT CHAR, CHAR MUE TAU KYA HUA JIVAT KAYEE HAZAR** (I have sacrificed my four sons in the service of these SONS (in the congregation); if four are dead, so what? Thousands here are my sons, still alive).

Derailed

You and I, the entire Sikh Community was claimed by Guru Gobind Singh as his children. Indeed the words of praise said in respect of the KHALSA will always put us to shame whatever we are able to do to be worthy of them—because we shall always be found wanting—but what is my particular chagrin today is that we have almost deliberately derailed ourselves and have become Sikhs and Khalsa only in name.

I used to remind myself

anonymously in a Punjabi article every month in a Ludhiana magazine that I had to do a lot to continue to earn the label of Khalsa. That was much before the events of last four years. Today, what I feared, has come true. The attributes of Khalsa are sadly missing in the lives of those who claim allegiance to Guru Gobind Singh:

- (i) Guru Gobind Singh's purity of heart and devotion to Truth is so sadly missing that the separate **Surat** of Khalsa which was intended to show him out as a symbol of Truth has become a target of ridicule
- (ii) Service and sacrifice, the hallmarks of the Khalsa have been subordinated to the lust for power and pelf, black money, drinking and other impure diversions;
- (iii) Devotion to outer

symbols, the 5 K' may have increased but the FEAR has overtaken some of us to such an extent that they have shaved off their hair and beard. Shamefully we believe that these outer symbols could take the place of inner strength and purity which would come by living the dictates of our Gurus in day-to-day life.

- (iv) Selfishness has so thoroughly taken control of us that inter-group rivalry, quarrels in the Gurdwaras, devotion to position in stead of **sewa** and other ills have shown us as laughing-stock. And ultimately, even the S.G.P.C. has been split after the split in various groupings.
- (V) We have so foolishly brought down all our traditions that apart from the ridicule that we

are now drawing towards ourselves, we have lost the path.

Alibis

How do we meet these shortcomings? Firstly by blaming others. It is the Congress, the Hindus, the other people—always someone else—who have been dividing us. But we have never questioned ourselves. Why do we get divided, why do we become fools in the hands of others? Why do we not steadfastly subordinate our selfish motives to the good of the community. There is a simple answer: **HAVING LOST THE PURITY OF THE GURU AND THE WAY OF LIFE THAT THE GURU GAVE US, WE LOOK FOR SCAPEGOATS, BUT WE DO NOT RETURN TO THE PATH, which envisages: Complete integrity, God's name in the heart all the 24 hours, prayers at amritvela contribution of 1/10ths of our income for**

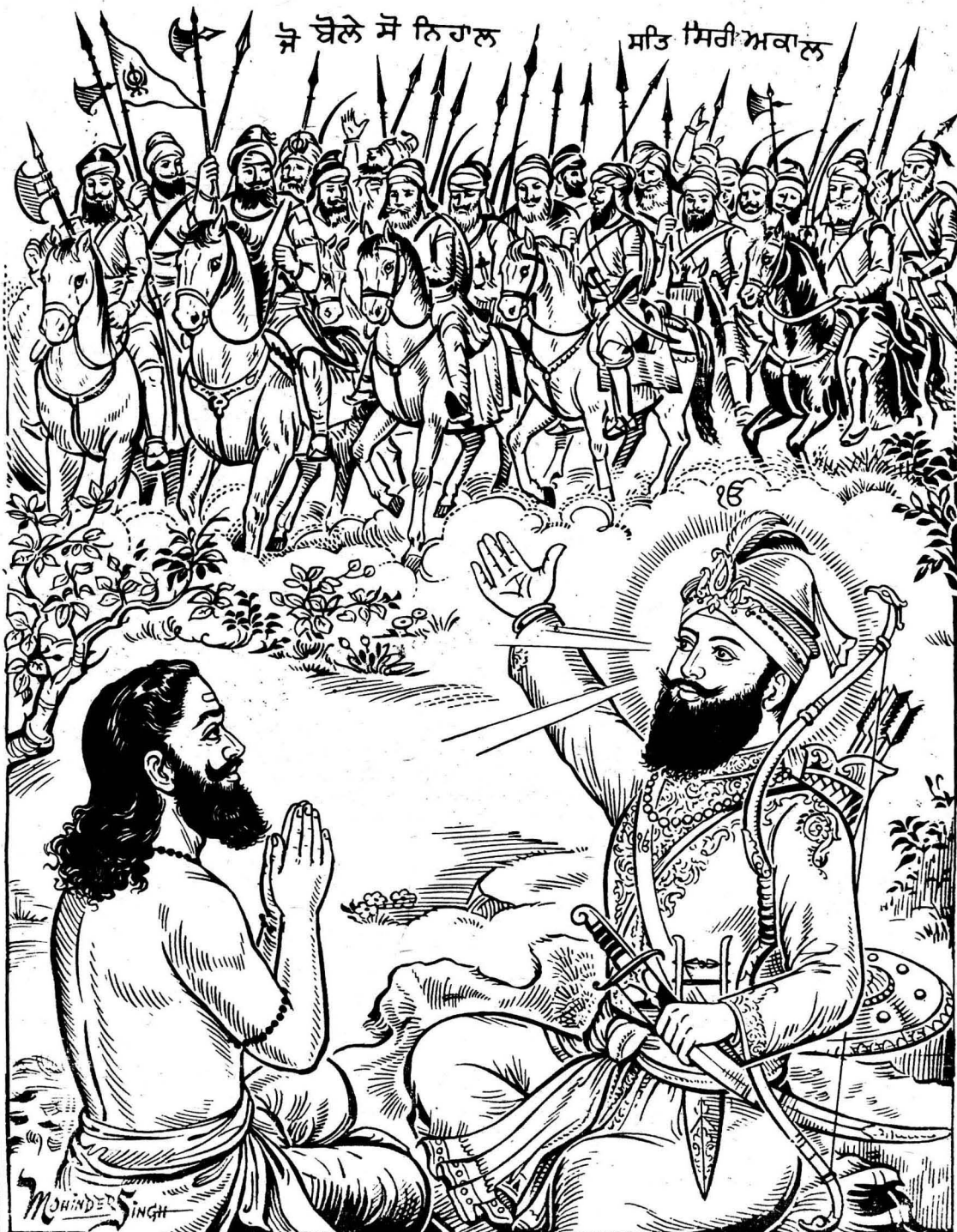
common good, as daswand, freedom from Kaam, krodh, lobh, moh and ahankar besides **nindia, chugli, lkha**, etc. as also devotion to ideals of sacrifice for righteousness.

Our second alibi is that in the present-day world, it is not possible to go by the Guru's word. Indeed, We have become wiser than the Guru. If we have been living in honour so far, it that early in this century when a Sikh had given evidence, the case was decided as the Judge wassure that the Sikh would never tell a lie. Today while we judge untruth and lack of integrity as our partners in alluring business, we say goodbye to the morality within us thus leaving our sheet-anchor and refuge.

Our third plea is that others have also degenerated. Indeed others have but does it give us a consolation? I had thought that the operation Bluestar, Nov. 84 anti-Sikh carnage and other upheavals would at least wake-up to the path of the Guru. It is indeed true that we have faced many injustices, we have been treated cruelly, but have we ourselves done enough to wake up. While we should continue to resist injustice non-violently, We should never stop at merely complaining against it. What we have developed is:

- FEAR of what will happen. FEAR about our property, our assets, our children. Sometimes I wonder whether we have totally forgotten that **WE WERE BORN OUT OF DEATH. GURU GOBIND SINGH DEMANDED OUR HEADS TO KEEP US ALIVE.** And, in any case, death can come any time anywhere. Sikh & FEAR are contradiction in terms.
- COMPROMISE with the wrong. For the avowed purpose of ensuring our progress, we compromise with the wrong—it may be authority, goondaism or pure selfish grouping—resulting in loss of self-respect and confidence. We have become perfect examples of: **RATAN TYAG KAUDI SANG RACHE, SAACH CHHOD JHOOTH SANG MACHE.**
- HATRED of those who do not agree with us, be they Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims or others. In this blind hatred our youngmen **KILL INNOCENT PEOPLE** in the belief that they are avenging the wrongs done to us. Such utter foolish interpretation of the Guru's concept of saint-soldier is practised and preached bringing up **HARTED** as our focal point in stead of **LOVE** as the Guru envisaged. **SEPARATISM** which Guru assiduously con-

Continued on page 14



What kind of protest leads to a successful outcome? This is a question which must have bothered several people on several occasions.

It kept on bothering me for a whole month. The Sikh Forum decided to stage a Satyagrah at the Boat Club, New Delhi, for one month. The plan of the protest was that 51 people would sit on relay hunger strike every morning and go on till the evening. During the day they would pray and talk among themselves. Occasionally there would be shabads and bhajans and, even less occasionally, there would be lectures and discourses. The programme lasted for four weeks and terminated on December 13, 1987.

The two demands put forward were: punish the guilty of the '84 carnage and release the innocent prisoners of Jodhpur and other jails. Both the demands were unexceptional and have been voiced by a large number of people including civil liberties activists.

In terms of participation and mobilisation the satyagrah was as successful as it could be. The minimum number of 51 was there everyday. But there were days when twice the number participated. On a couple of days the number of participants went up to even 200 and beyond. While the majority of those who participated were Sikhs, quite some others also participated. For instance, there was a young boy, perhaps not even 18, who belonged to Ghaziabad. He came one day and enquired if he could join. He was told that everybody was welcome to join and so he did. Then there was Shri Shakti Prasad Pandey, National Vice-President of the Socialist Party. He joined the satyagrah and observed a fast for full 72 hours. Actually Justice V M Tarkunde came on the day he called of the hunger strike and offered him a glass of juice.

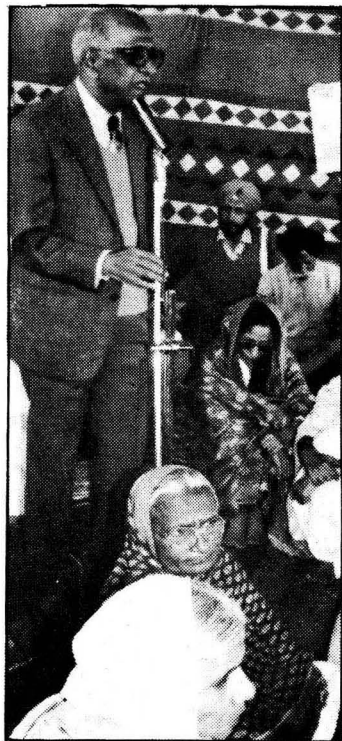
Political Support

As to political support, it was extended mainly by those in the opposition, the more prominent of them who visited the satyagrah were V P Singh, H.N. Bahugana and Kanshi Ram and leaders of various other groups in Parliament like the Lok Dal, the Telugu Desam and several others.

This is precisely point to be noted. Members of the opposition sympathised with

the satyagrahis but no one from the ruling party visited them. Evidently the whole thing has not politicised. If you are with the government, you support it, even in the unjust measures that it takes, be it the failure to punish the guilty of the killings in 1984 or release of those who are kept behind bars for years together against the law of the country and against all accepted canons of human rights.

In other words, the attitudes adopted depend upon one's political sympathies. If you are with the ruling party, everything that the party does is in order. If you are against the ruling party, everything, or almost so, that the government does is wrong. While one can understand this kind of a stance in regard to most matters, there is something odd about adopting such a posture in matters which involve civil liberties and the protection of human rights.



Just. V.M. Tarkunde

U.N. Declaration

Quite some decades ago, the United Nations adopted a declaration on human rights. The point about the Declaration was that while one country cannot interfere into the affairs of another country because both are sovereign and no one has the right to sit in judgement on another country, human rights are a different matter. Those were codified and it was affirmed that regardless of what

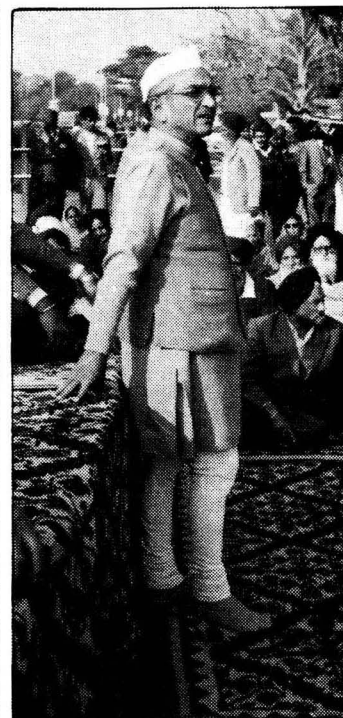
someone's loyalties are, when it comes to the protection of human rights, one can go beyond the confines of normal loyalties and take a stand. It appears that the Congressmen in this country have not heard of any such thing.

There is another dimension to this problem and one could not but reflect over what was happening. The protest was launched by the Sikhs and it was mainly the Sikhs who participated. A few others who either participated or extended their support had a humanist kind of outlook and believed in the primacy of democratic rights and civil liberties. The number of such people is rather limited. In the event the satyagrah turned out to be a protest by the Sikhs against their right to live and function as citizens of a free country.

Does such a protest have any chances of being making the kind of impact that it ought to?

should be no doubt that the majority reaction was either one of apathy or of approval.

If the grievances of the Sikhs have not been redressed for over three years, this is because it does not matter to the government. There is widespread social sanction for the government to victimise and harass the Sikhs. Occasionally there are protests. More than often than not, at least in the government, there is an attempt to hold the scales even. A state of insanity, so to speak, had overtaken some people those few days in when November '84 there was looting, burning and killing. But after that the frenzy seems to have expended itself and there was a return to normalcy, or near normalcy. The Sikhs are suspects when it comes to highly confidential matters. For the rest, they can be entrusted with all kinds of things including the matters of



H.M. Bahuguna

difficult to answer. This is a matter which forfeited can completely recollecting of that kind and it will be a lot for the country situation where looked upon as of the country saboteurs.

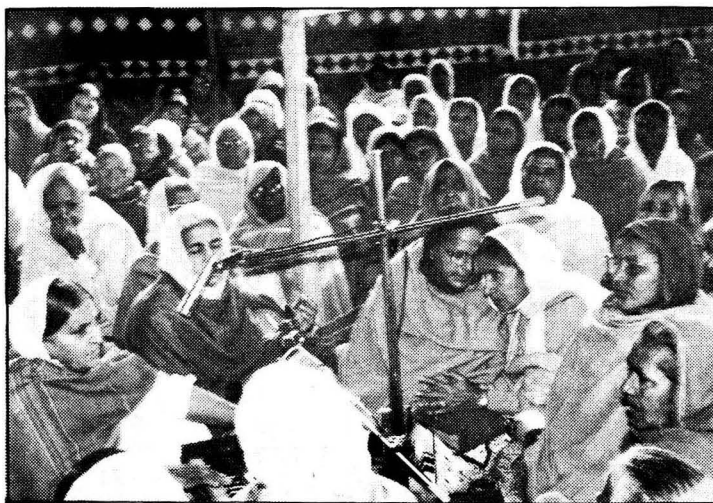
All this is a depressing reaction changing the sense of all Sikhs may be over than it is expected thing should not meanwhile. Some have acted in a has led to between the S Hindus. While a tradition history and, once it happens let to another and a distinct cleavage between Hindus and the substantial extent

The Satyagrah a

Put another way, which is the target audience? If it is those who already agree with you, it does not add up to much. If it is an attempt to reach out to those people who are, so to speak, unattached, the question to ask is who are they and where are they. Most people are apathetic rather than non-attached. What happens to others that is not of much concern to them, at least not directly so.

directly so. If several thousands Sikhs were killed in Delhi and other places, it did bother some people but not all that much. In most cases the immediate neighbours felt concerned enough to protect them. But if what was happening was some distance away or the people concerned were not known, it made no impact upon them. They expressed their concern but did little more than that. In some cases even the feeling of concern was absent. In a large number of cases there was tacit approval of what had happened. The reactions varied from total approval to total disapproval.

Where a person stood depended upon his sympathies, his outlook and the way his sensibilities had been trained and educated. But of this there



Women Satyagrahis

security.

The Issues

Two questions arise here. How long will this go on? And secondly will it ever change? The answer to the first question is that it will certainly carry on for sometime. Indeed as long as those in power feel that the state of confrontation helps the ruling party to stay in power. At least this is the thinking as of today.

There are forces working against such a state of mind but these are not very powerful. Once in a while unexpected things also happen; for example, the election in Haryana. It should not be surprising if in the next general election the ruling party gets a jolt, such as it has had for quite some time. But one never knows.

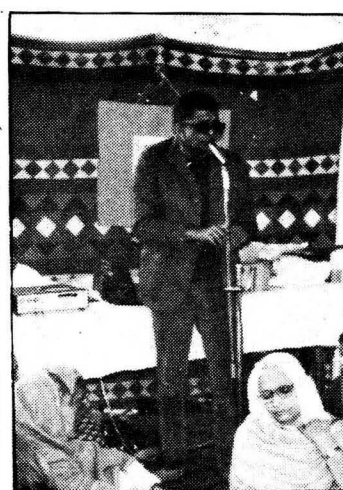
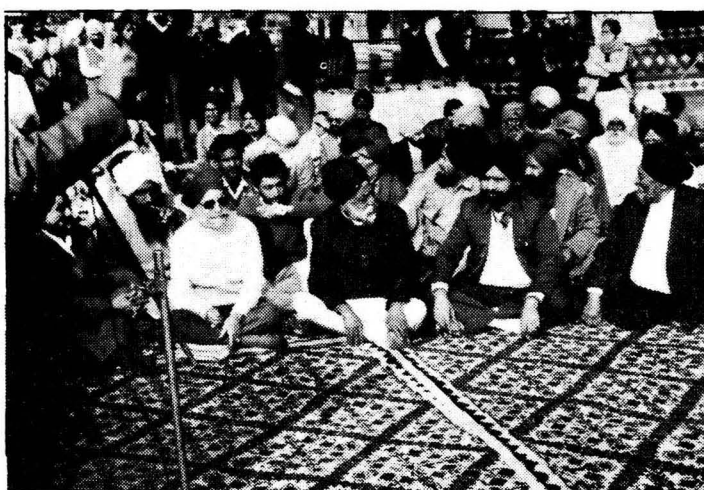
The second question flows from the first one, but is more

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Clearly efforts be made by me the communities the cleavage is a pre-condition for is that the relation the two communities out of the political asking for more state of polity today. But unless this kind happens sense of alienation other will not indeed it should

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The four satyagraha at the New Delhi with emergence of satyagrahis. More among the satyagra Gen. (R) Jagjit Singh a soldier turned sat



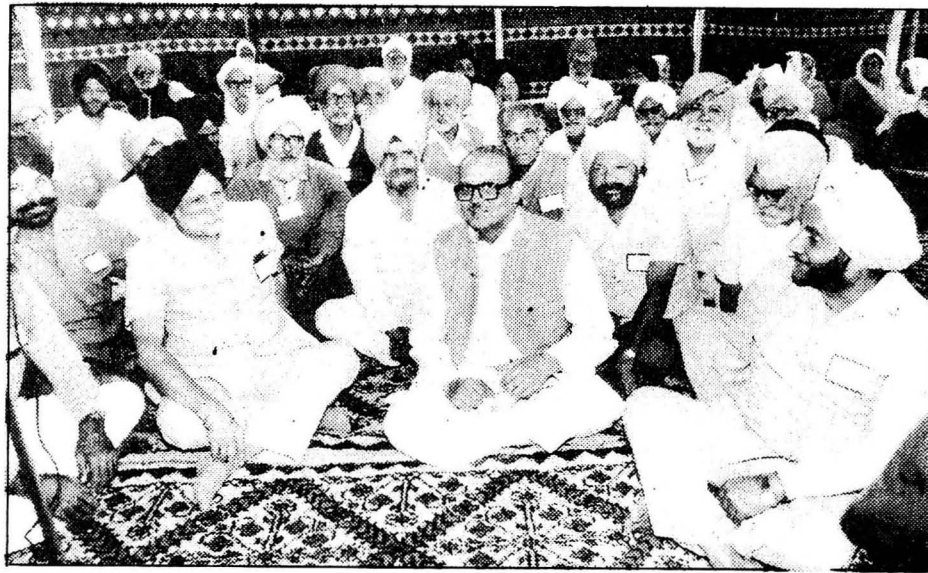
Prof. Rajni Kothari



Bhagwant Singh

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Mr. V. P. Singh, leader of the Jan Morcha, with the volunteers of the Sikh forum who are observing a 30-day relay hunger strike at the Boat Club in New Delhi.

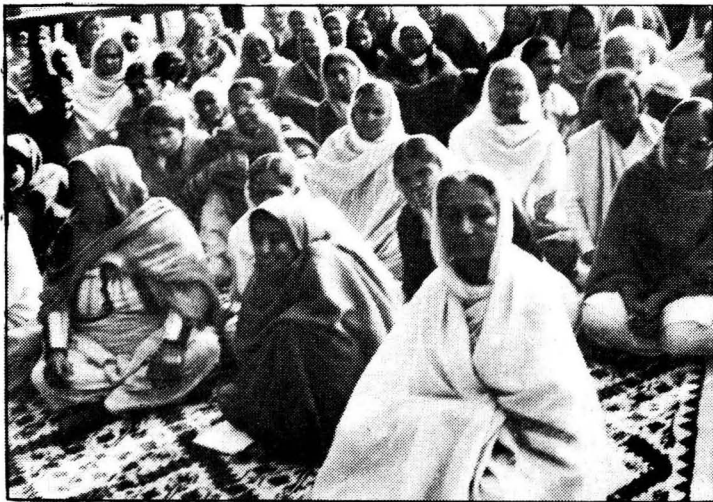


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H.G. Desh Pande

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Mrs. Bhagwant Kaur Aurora

provided nerve centre co-ordination to the satyagraha programme. Mrs Aurora fasted all the twenty eight days of the November satyagraha, and inspired the satyagrahis with her exemplary self-decipline. Her expositions of the issues involved brought her added glory because of the chaste Punjabi prose which kept the listeners spell bound. The exclusive ladies satyagraha for two days set new records in annals of peaceful protest.

S. Bhagwant Singh Dilwari, the sant of the satyagraha elevated the satyagrahis spiritually through his idealistic exposition of the message of the Gurus to the Gursikhs. S. Dalawari had resigned from Indian Foreign Service job, and has served the lepers at Amravati (Maharashtra) for the last ten years. He has toured all through Punjab for eight times during the troubled 1980s. S. Dalawari conveys the message of the Gurus with love and affection. In this sense he provides a happy contrast to the thundering sa nts.

Sardarni Gurcharan Kaur Bindra from Bokaro throbbed like brave heart amongst the



Sh. I.K. Gujral

satyagrahis. She fasted for weeks and yet kept the camp alive through her comments on the present day crises. Her indelible message was 'Keep it up' do not submit to the blackmail of crooked politicians.

Sh. T. wari, vice-president Socialist party of India, expressed his support for the satyagrahis and their demands by undergoing one day fast on the 16th of November 1987.

Sh. Shakti Parsad from Madhya Pradesh, fasted for 72

hours in support of the satyagrahis and their demands.

S. Nirmal Singh, kept company with Sh. Shakti Parsad and fasted for 72 hours with him. Justice V.M. Tarkunde, the pillar of Civil rights movement in India, offered glass of juice to Sh. Shakti Parsad and S. Nirmal Singh and urged them to end their fast after their point has been taken not of by the public.

Prof. Rajni Kothari, expressed his solidarity with the satyagrahis and supported the two demands unconditionally.

Sh. Verma from U.P. fasted for several days.

The leaders who expressed their solidarity with the satyagrahis and gave solid support to the two demands included; Sh. H.N. Bahuguna president Lok Dal, Sh. I.K. Gujral, Sh. L.K. Advani president B.J.P. Smti Menka Gandhi, Sh. P. Upendra and Dr. V. Reddy of Telegu Dessam, Sh. Jaipal Reddy of Janta Party, Sh. Satpal of Lajpat Bhawan, Sh. Vijay Pratap of Sampuran kranti andolan and many others.



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Singh Aurora,
yagrahi Gen

Aurora the architect of victory in 1971 Bangala Desh War distinguished himself yet another time. A totally new daily schedule kept Gen. Aurora amidst the satyagrahis for four weeks days on end. The Parliament was also in session

and Gen. Aurora combined his commitment to parliamentary work with the demands of November Satyagraha. He was a seintillating inspiration to all the participants.

Mrs Bhagwant Kaur, the beloved Bhanti of Gen Aurora,



Diliwari

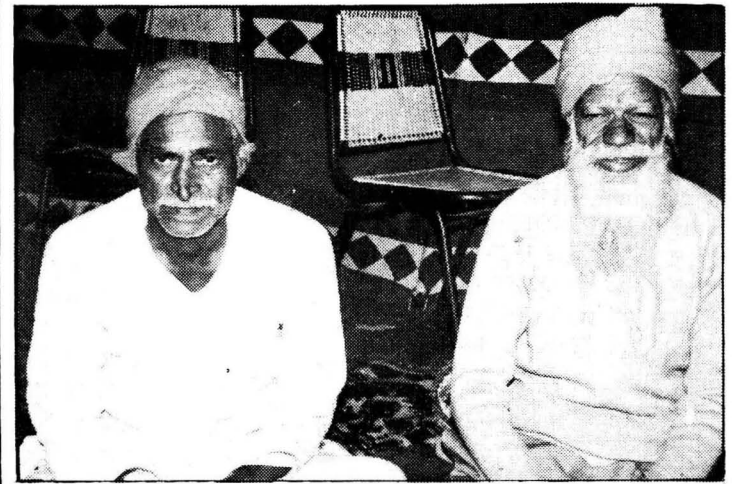


Dr. V. Reddy



Lt. Gen. J.S., Aurora (r.l.),

Jaipal Reddy



Shanti Pandey

Nirmal Singh

The Lonely Voice

Ravindra Kalia

Mother was sitting quietly on a *modha* and knitting. Father was not there in the room. Father's coat was there, smelling of Nephthalene. He looked at the changed version of his room and felt quite uneasy. Gathering himself he told Mother he had come.

He had hoped that Mother would be standing at the gate and waiting. That was why he had paid off the scooter wallah at the turning of the lane. But looking at the room he felt that what he had dreaded had already taken place. The wardrobe was not in its place, shoes were lying in the rack and instead of waiting at the gate, Mother was knitting mechanically without her glasses.

"I was waiting for you. Do you always come back at this hour?" she asked.

He said that he usually came back at that hour and played upon his mouth organ for some time and then went to bed.

"I have no faith in anything you say," said Mother. "The neighbour was saying that you came back late at night and sometimes didn't come back at all, and very often for days together you locked yourself indoors."

He said he had never seen this neighbour. He did not talk to her. He did not even know how many kids she had had. Last summer, she must have had one because he was given this wardrobe at that time. Her husband said they were running short of space. They were constantly running short of space.

He wanted to divert Mother's attention.

"Why don't you talk to them? Who else you think is yours in this big city? You must maintain at least a formal acquaintance." Mother was serious.

He said he knew about it all and sometimes he said "Hello" to them. Mother started heating milk and asked, "What will you have along with milk?"

He said he didn't take milk. He would take ginger biscuits and coffee.

"These bitter biscuits!" said Mother. "Why do you annoy could have been averted, for an injured foot would not have dealt such fatal blows. But those too were the strokes of an injured heart."

The nailless toe is now giving him excruciating pain. He wants to let off such a loud shriek that the very foundations of this city, where there are such bad roads that accidents cannot be avoided and injuries are quite frequent, would be shaken.

In the darkness, wrapped up in his thoughts, he hits his head against a lamp-post. He feels unsteady and giddy on account of this sudden impact. For support, he leans against the lamp-post itself.

After coming to, he looks all around and finds material enough to explode his mind and break his heart. But, now he feels that both these limbs in his

body are made of stone and covered with a coal tar of defensive reasoning.

"In one way, it was good for the poor little soul to leave this world early, as he was quickly out of this hell. The child did not even have shoes to cover his tiny and delicate feet. How long could he move on the hard roads of this city? And then, in my presence, the motherless child was subjected to such ill treatment! How could I tolerate all this? The only fault of that neglected and wretched child was that he wanted something to cover his nakedness. For this trifling matter he was put to such humiliation. It is because I am unemployed. I still remember very clearly that, while hitting him with the pointed toe of my shoe, I was pretty conscious that I was thrashing my own degraded self. How can I admit that I wanted to murder my own child? I was his father and had blood relation with him: after all, blood is thicker than water."

Discarding the support of the lamp-post, he walks briskly towards his house. He at last stands in front of the house reclining over the police jeep. He silently listens to the clamorous wailing in his house and watches intently like a traveller who is a witness to a road accident. The wound in his foot gets cold and the frozen blood acts like a bandaid. He is again lost in thought:

"What would have happened if I had not struck my child with my boot? Who knows? Life is a singular and changeable thing, full of vicissitudes. How little it takes to save or wreck up!"

me? Why don't you look after your health? You have gone so

dark!"

He said he took great care of his health and that his complexion was always dark.

His words had no effect. She handed him the glass of milk as though he would drink it.

"Your father was glad there was no cigarette ash in the room."

He said he had given up smoking. He felt happy he could clean the room so well. He looked at the wardrobe and the rack and felt sorry over his foolishness. He could have thrown away all those things but he had been waiting for the wastepaper-buyer. He looked at his mother. He felt Mother was getting old. Last time, when he had seen her, she had no wrinkles about her neck. He did not want to be defeated by her. He said when he came to this house there were countless cigarettends, ash and bottles of beer and whisky—lying about in the room. He tried to assume an expression of surprise. He placed the glass of milk on the floor and climbed on the *modha*, to show her the empty bottles lying beneath the old newspapers on top of the wardrobe.

Mother saw and expressed no surprise, but only a sense of relief over the unfolding of a secret. Her smile broke out from in between her wrinkles, "So these aren't yours."

He laughed and said if they were his, wouldn't he throw them!

Mother did not laugh nor seemed convinced. She wanted to sound him thoroughly.

"Your father saw and was very sorry. He wanted we should go back immediately. He gets upset over things of

little importance."

He wished to ask where was Father but he could not. He was feeling a sense of guilt. He had no idea that his parents would start cleaning the house as soon as they reached here.

His shoes were in the rack. He looked inside his shoes. There was nothing. When Mother went into the kitchen, he opened the almirah and fumbled for something behind books. Without looking at it, he stuffed a cellophane packet. If only he had thrown away all these things! Perhaps he had never thrown away such things. He could have given it to his neighbour but he knew that his neighbour did not believe in it; he believed in God. His parents must have been struck by its presence. He stood, ashamed. He had often seen such a packet in Father's almirah. He had discovered the hiding place, too, from him, or had acquired it by right of heredity. The first time he had seen it he was amazed but he hadn't been able to inquire about it for he knew that Father hid only those things behind books which he could not explain. Father used to keep his certificates, life-insurance policy, the house registration letter rolled in a round iron-box, all behind his books. He also kept his pass book there. As a boy, whenever he found an opportunity, he always studied Father's pass book.

He stood there in a state of indecision. Then he unbuttoned his shirt. He hid a few foreign magazines inside his *banyan*, rebuttoned his shirt and sat unhappily on the *modha*, undoing his shoestrings. This morning too, he had woken up with the same felling of depression. It was after years he had seen the morning in this city and he felt disturbed that buses were running so early, people stood in queues at the milk booths and newspapers were distributed even earlier.

Or perhaps he knew about all this but he did not know that he woke up so late. Before going to the station he could hardly convince himself that he was 'to receive' his parents. Quite incuriously he kept smoking on the platform and when he saw the train approaching, he threw away the fag and washed his hands. He did not forget that Father took smoking very seriously. He too was at fault in the matter. One day, due to his carelessness, his *charpoy* and the sheets had caught fire and his younger sister told him that when she returned from college that day, Father was busy throwing bucketfuls of water on the bed. However, this matter was never discussed by them. But after that incident he stopped looking at cigarette advertisements in the newspapers in Father's presence. What was more, when the Radio Ceylon broadcast cigarette ads, he was obliged to tune in elsewhere.

As his parents alighted, he found them very familiar. Somehow he had not hoped to recognise them so easily and he had not thought faces could be that familiar. He mumbled something by way of courtesy and was convinced that he had a mother whose neck was showing wrinkles, who had a broken tooth and who could place her hand on his head so possessively. He had a father like anybody's father, whose hair had turned all grey and who was continually spitting. As he looked at them again, he felt they were toys whom he would place on the mantelpiece. But he had no mantelpiece at home, not even a table. Mother would be cross, not even a broomstick. He was talking to them and wondering why he wrote to them so half heartedly. He read their letters and stuffed them most carelessly in his pocket. Perhaps he could have written much more to them, but he never did. He always wrote a few crammed up lines about which his younger sister always felt very annoyed. She often complained about his letters bearing the same content and what was worse, written in black ink. Her complaint was justifiable. If she had not got married, they would have seen the sea together.

As he got up from the *modha* he knocked against the glass of milk and the milk spilt.

"You didn't want it, so you didn't have it," Mother said entering the room.

He tiptoed to the bed. From the adjoining window he looked at the lane. The old woman in the lane was munching in her usual manner. He put his back to the window.

"Have you quarrelled with somebody? Why do you look so depressed?" asked Mother.

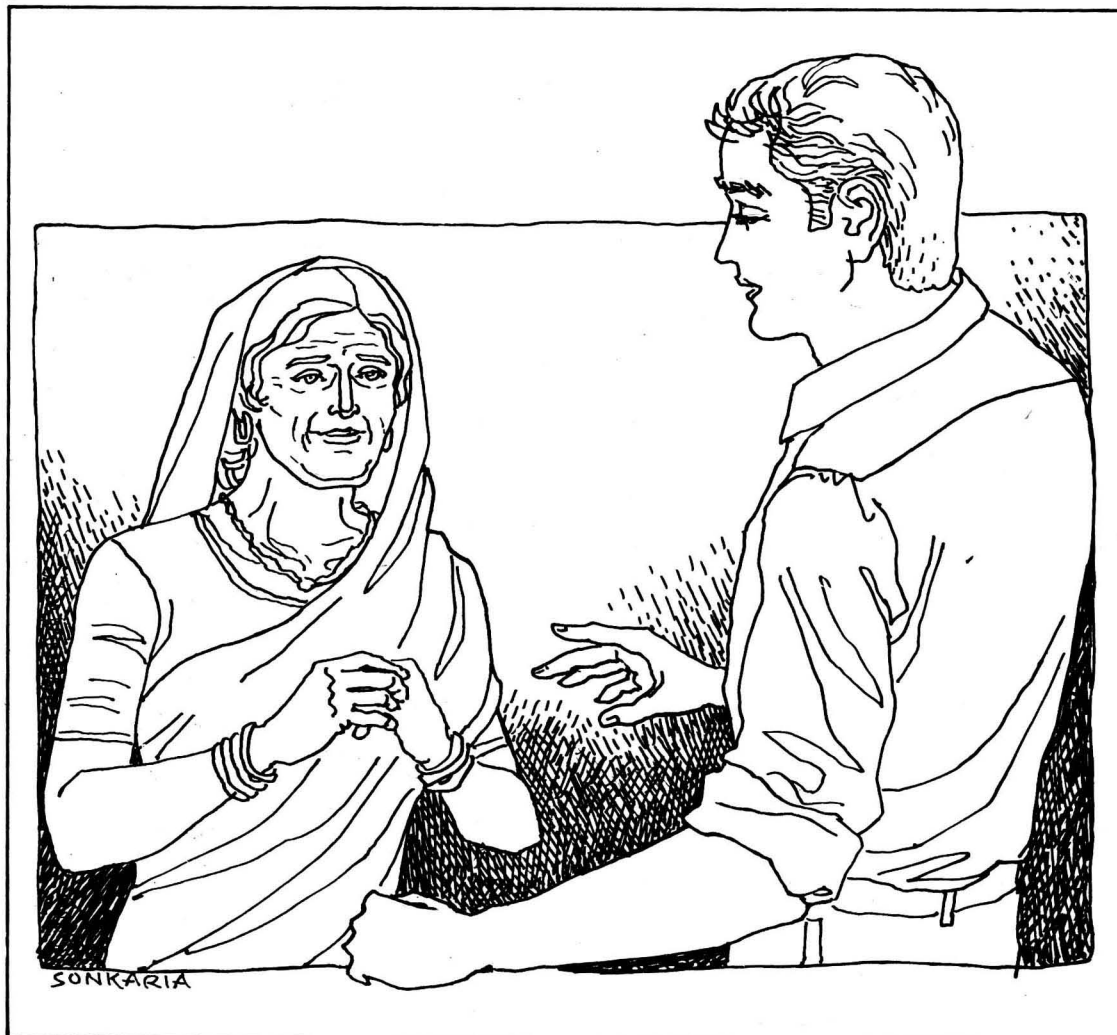
He said he hadn't quarrelled with anybody and that he was not depressed. He was, perhaps, tired.

"I feel you are being inconvenienced by our presence."

He said he was very glad to have them and he was feeling nice too.

"The neighbour told me she had never seen you laughing."

He said he never felt amused when he looked at his



neighbour.

"I think something is disturbing you again and again and you are all the time avoiding it. It is about a girl?" Mother looked anxiously at him.

He said, fortunately he had never got mixed up with girls.

"Who is P?" mother asked. "Kishori was telling me something."

He said Kishori must have brought up some ageold issue.

"You had written to him that you had been feeling very lonely. He came and told me...You know, his wife again had twins."

He said he was writing all that to fool Kishori but he didn't know Kishori would still talk so childishly.

He felt sorry that from now on he would not be able to write to Kishori either. He had been writing to Kishori because he was miles away and he liked breaking down like a meteor, not near about but thousands of miles away.

Mother spilt the water from the waterjug and mopped the floor. His socks were slightly wet. Mother put away the socks, placed his shoes in the rack and sat beside him on the *charpoy*. She started caressing him on the forehead.

He felt as if he would cry.

"What has happened to you? What is wrong with you?" Mother looked at him almost helplessly. He wanted to say she should have faith in him, nothing had happened to him and nothing was wrong with him, but he remained silent. He never liked talking in sticky sentimental tones. He sat with his eyes cast down. He couldn't stand the fact that Mother was trying to know him and was anxious about him when nothing was really wrong with him.

"What have you put inside your shirt?" Mother asked as she fingered his shirt.

He said those were books. He was not in the habit of holding books while walking.

"Let me see what books?"

He said they were in English and soon he would bring a copy of the *Gita* for Mother. One of his friend owned a bookstall.

He took out the books and hurled them carelessly on to the almirah. Only yesterday he had covered those books.

"I want the *Ramayana* in big letter. I can't read the old one. Its lettering is very small." Mother started cleaning her glasses with the edge of her sari.

"Not even with glasses on?" It was probably the first time he had asked her something.

"No, the left eye is almost

defunct."

He said he would take a day's casual leave tomorrow and get her eyes tested.

"You only need an excuse to take a casual."

He laughed. Mother was after all his mother. She kissed his hand. It must have smelt of nicotine but she did not say anything.

If only he had gathered himself together neatly before parents arrived, he thought. But before this, he had never felt he was disorganised.

Mother went out and he felt his nerves go tense. Last night he had hidden the bottle of tranquiliser. He quietly climbed on the top of the wardrobe and took out the bottle from the hinges of the ventilator. He put it in his pocket.

There was no water in the jug. He took a glass from the kitchen and went to the tap. Putting a pill in his mouth he gulped it down.

"What have you taken?"

He turned round like a C.I.D. constable—Mother was standing behind him.

"What have you taken? Speak out." She was trembling with fear and fury.

He said he had headache and had taken Anacin.

He was holding the glass tight. Mother took the glass from him and gulped some water. Then she filled the waterjug. He stood guiltily for some time, then followed Mother into the room.

Mother held out some pills from her purse and asked, "What pills are these."

These were his ever familiar pills.

"Do you know what all was found in your bed?" These pills, letters and pins! Have you ever cleaned your bed?" Mother was excited.

He said he cleaned not the whole bed but only the sheet some time. This morning he had taken out a new sheet.

"What are these pills for?" Mother insisted. "If you don't tell me, I shall take them myself and see."

He picked up the pills from Mother's palm and said these were not those pills with which his friend committed suicide. These were meant to relieve exhaustion and were prescribed by an authorised doctor. He no longer felt exhausted and took proper care of his health. He took his meals regularly. He was never fond of milk but he hoped that with Ovaltine he might like it...

He was talking while Mother was looking at him helplessly as though she was seeing him die a slow death.

Book Review

The Politics of Human Rights

Lokayan Bulletin 5/4-5, Special Number on the Politics of Human Rights, pp. 159, Price Rs. 8/- Published by the available with "Lokayan" 13, Alipur Road, Delhi 110054.

"The aim of the state is the conservation of natural rights of man; these rights are liberty, property, security and resistance to oppression" lays down an article of French Constitution of 1789. And from then onwards most of the states swear with this notion of constitutionalism and mention various types of right in their constitutions. In India too struggle for independence, which included a democratic revolution within, had raised the level of political consciousness and created an awareness in which state is looked upon as a powerful instrument for removing social injustice, eliminating artificial inequalities, and bringing about the moral and material uplift of all the members of the community.

Thus after independence not only the people but the makers of Indian Constitution and the leadership at the helm of affairs had an image of a political system for India that would provide a frame work for a democratic government and institutional structure capable of both sustaining and accelerating change and to provide an instrument for stimulating increased participation and securing higher levels of institutionalisation necessary to accommodate expanding demands. This image of free india was reflected in the words of the Objectives Resolution tabled by Pandit Nehru and unanimously accepted in the Constituent Assembly. It contains.... "Wherein all power and authority of the sovereign independent India, its constituent parts and organs of government are derived from the people; and wherein shall be guaranteed and secured to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political; equality of status of opportunity and before law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action subject to law and public morality...."

India, thus adopted not only a democratic system but its constitution accepted the concept of limited government and provided a comprehensive charter of rights. But the political system works within an ecology of other systems of human interaction, namely social, economic and religious systems. In this context given the nature of social-economic structure and vested interests within that, the dominant and vocal sections placed a narrow interpretation of the word

"democracy" and there started a process of infringement of Human rights and Civil Liberties.

These were, to begin with, seen only as aberration or necessary excesses during the stage of nation building and necessary economic development. It was only with the declaration of the state of emergency, in June 1975, that the fragile basis of our constitutional rights was brought home to us. It made the concern and discussion of human rights part of mainstream public discourse. After 1975, many civil and democratic rights groups were formed and since have been functioning all over the country.

The paradox as suggested by the editors of the volume under review, is that not withstanding the a wider, possibly better organised effort than before on the human rights front, the situation in the country does not seem to be improving.... Along side is a growing feeling of ineffectivity and powerlessness in various human rights related groups, not only the specialised civil and democratic right groups, but, also the different base level (grass root) or support groups working among different constituencies and involved with struggles for a radical transformation of the Indian situation. There is a growing realisation that a weak and insecure state cannot only turn more fascist (or neo-fascist as the word goes) in its methods, but can help generate a mindset particularly amongst the slightly better off of its citizens, that all such dissent and protest activity is anti-state, anti-national, inherently destabilising and therefore needs to be put down with a heavy hand. (Page 3)

Thus, one has not only to see the structures and the instrumentalities set up by the state to provide justice to its citizens but also the mass media and sections of intelligentsia, collaborating in a wide ranging process of ruthlessly enforcing the status quo. It is this paradox that this special issue of "Lokayan Bulletin" seeks to explore.

For those who are not acquainted with Lokayan it may be informed that Lokayan (Dialogue of the People) is an intellectual initiative to promote active and sustained exchange among activists from non-party political organisations and movements and other concerned citizens. It is a movement that deals with very specific problems of the people such as survival in the face of destructive development process and a repressive state apparatus, limits and range of political struggles (local and national) against these tendencies, the inimical role of science and technology and its international tentacles, all of this conceived in the framework

of the struggle for civil and democratic rights of the people.

As a part of its activities "Lokayan" publishes a bimonthly bulletin covering the debates and activities concerning these issuee.

The issue under review is a special issue on the "Politics of Human Rights". To understand what human rights are and what is their linkage with other processes it goes into their conceptual extent, origins, present state, and contemplated actions to to maintain them. The contributors are well know democratic rights activists and scholars including Rajni Kothari, Sadanand Meron, K. Balgopal, Sumanta Banerjee, Manoranjan Mohanty, Harsh Sethi, Upendra Baxi, P.A. Substian, Achyut Yagnik, V.M. Tarkunde, Smitu Kothari, and Sanjeev Prakash.

Apart from analysing the meaning and status of Human Rights patterns and trends, issues of violence and communalism, Law and himan rights movements the volume also takes into account the situation in Southern Sri Lanka and Tibet. It also provides a listing of organisations active in human rights movement.

No doubt in view of recent origin of intellectual exercise on the issue of civil liberties the volume does not cover all the possible aspects and areas, But it raises certain very important questions, stimulates serious thinking and provides a starting point for many a long term debates. If nothing else it will make the readers think in a broader and relative perspective rather in isolation or autonomy which at present is one of the basic problems of Human Rights movements. The volume, therefore, deserves a serious note by all those who are concerned with the issue

A.S. Narang

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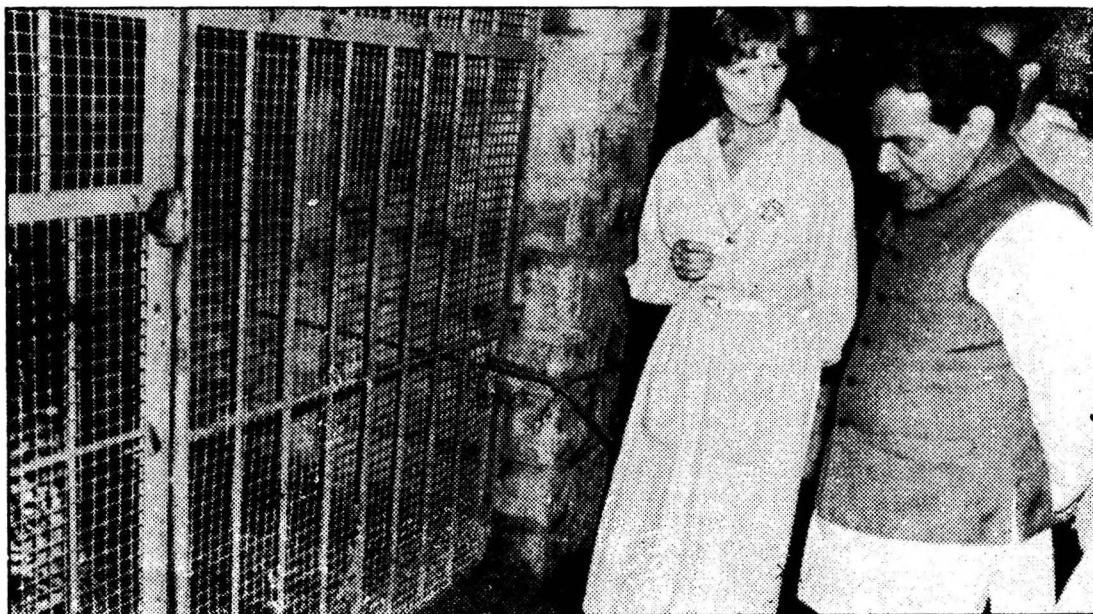
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Rescued tigers roam free again in Karnataka



One of the six Royal Bengal tigers (above) rescued from the Cross Brothers Circus in London after it was released in the Bannerghatta National Park near Bangalore by the Karnataka chief minister on Saturday. The tigers were confiscated late last month as the circus had violated the UK Wild Animals Act. Actress Virginia McKenna (below), a wildlife enthusiast, had requested Mr Hedge to provide shelter for the tigers as a home could not be found in the UK. (UNI pictures)



Bangalore, Nov. 24 : Six magnificent tigers have travelled from their cages in a sordid circus in England to a new life at the Bannerghatta national park, 20 km from Bangalore. They were released in 15 acres of natural tiger habitat on Saturday, almost a year after the campaign to save them was launched by Actress Virginia McKenna, her husband Filmmaker Bill Travers and the *Daily Mail*.

Bannerghatta already has two tigers apart from elephants and lions. After years in cramped cages, the six circus tigers are slowly adjusting to this more hospital environment. "We have had no problem handling them, though initially the tigress among them did not seem willing to move out of her cage. She was probably suffering from jetlag," said one of the officials of the national park.

"Operation Tiger" was launched by the *Daily Mail* after the six beautiful tigers were discovered trapped, in tiny cages "just three paces wide, up and down, three paces this way and three paces the other" in the Cross Brothers' circus, a backstreet establishment in Kent. Public reaction was quick and overwhelming, but even after months of campaigning,

no permanent home was found for them.

While the *Mail* campaigned, the tigers were taken away from the circus, but since no one was willing to have them, they were to be put to sleep.

The Zoo Check Trust, of which Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers are members, took up the case of the tigers and asked for postponement of their death till the trust had explored all avenues of rehabilitating them. It was then in May this year that Ms McKenna met the Karnataka chief minister, Mr. Ramakrishna Hegde, who had been in London on a tour, and told him of their dilemma. Mr. Hegde immediately offered the tigers a home at Bannerghatta on the condition that the Zoo Check met the expenses of transporting them.

The *Daily Mail* then carried an appeal to its readers and the response was so overwhelming that *Mail on Sunday Tigerline* has to be opened so that readers could phone in donations even using their credit cards. The phone rang continuously for three days with donations ranging from 50 pence to £5. In just 48 hours, £4,000 had been collected.

Uncertainties about whether the tigers would make it to

Bannerghatta, however, persisted. Just two days before the tigers were due, the Indian government wanted to know how the tigers were going to be accommodated since Wildlife experts feared they would corrupt the purebred lineage of the Bengal Tigers at Bannerghatta. The Union government was satisfied with the assurance that the tigers would be housed in a separate enclosure. The six have been identified as Royal Bengal tigers, but their pedigree is not known.

The Bannerghatta authorities see only one problem that might crop up with the tigers in the future "These tigers have always been behind bars and rule by a whiphand. An understanding that these tigers are different from the other animal because they are not afraid of humans should be built among the public"

An animal handler from Zoo Check has been brought in with the tigers and he will stay on for a month to train the staff at Bannerghatta. Zoo Check's commitment will not end there. It has promised to provide more funds if the tigers need to be separated or shifted.

(From Telegraph)

A Tribal Democracy in Danger

The world's oldest democracy in the midst of snow-covered Himalayan mountains in small valley here is facing a threat to its survival.

This is mainly due to exposure to outside world, constant touch with visiting non-residents, increase in literacy and growing social and cultural contacts through various media enlightening the outlook of the local people, particularly the younger generation.

Besides the authority of its "parliament", its inter-marriage system and other customs are under constant strain.

Situated at a height of 9000 feet above sea level, Malana's democratic system is in existence from the earliest known times. The local tribalmen have been electing their representatives by a system of votes.

Ignoring the political and social changes in the outside world over the centuries, it has established a sound democratic system of its own with all its inhabitants, numbering about 800 participating in the village administration.

The affairs of the people are governed by the "Jamlu Devta", known as the divine ruler and the bicameral "parliament" elected mainly through adult franchise.

The "parliament" of this oldest republic consists of two houses. The upper house is more powerful and its decisions are final and unanimous. The upper house called "Quorum" or "Jyashthang Quorum" have 11 representatives, three of them are permanent members (Kardar, pujari and goor) designated as "Karmishth" and eight elected members who are called "jatheres". The election wards are formed of equal households and are called "ghug."

The lower house is called "Quore" or "Kanishathang." It is represented by the head of each family of the village, except Harijans. At present, there are about 160 households in the village.

The matter is first taken up for consideration and decision by the lower house. The aggrieved person approaches it by ringing a bell. The lower house, after hearing the arguments, delivers the judgement. One can also move the upper house for an appeal.

If the two Houses fail to arrive at a decision for want of evidence or the decision is not agreed by all, the matter is referred to the "Devta", whose decision is conveyed through the "goor" and is binding.

With the order of the "Devta", both the parties concerned are asked to bring a goat each. In the presence of the "Devta" and members of the two Houses, both the goats are fed equal

quantity of a poisonous herb. The person whose goat dies first is "declared" offender and the judgement is pronounced in favour of the person whose goat dies later.

For a meeting, all "parliament" members assemble in the pandal. The members of "Quorum" (upper house) sit on a raised platform called "Chotra" and the members of "Quore" (lower house) on the ground. The "Devta" is seated at a sacred place called "patra".

Though the law of the country extends to this Malana valley. It has never been enforced in its letter and spirit in view of fullproof system of dispensation of justice.

Except for one case of theft by an outsider at the temple treasury, they have so far been disposing of all cases themselves without the assistance of the district administration.

Though the people have blind and deep faith in the "Devta" and hardly dare to disobey him and decisions of "parliament" are binding, some recent verdicts of the parliament and "Devta" have reportedly been questioned by the convicts who have threatened to take the matter to the judicial courts. One of them related to a land dispute in which the "Devta" had ordered social boycott of the offender.

The local elders, however, claim that the Malana's ancient democracy has always, withstood the test in the past and express confidence that the present threat to the survival of the system will also blow off. They feel that the democracy in the valley is deep-rooted and will never break up even when it fully opens up for the outside modern civilisation.

There is no historic evidence about the origin of the Malana valley. Local legend says "Danu Rakshas" inhabited in the area. "Jamdagni rishi" called "Jamlu Devta", who came from the Spiti valley was on his way to Malana when he was confronted by "Danu Rakshas." As "Danu" was defeated, he requested before transferring his estate to "Jamlu Devta" to keep alive something significant in his memory in the area. The "Devta" conceded to his request and assured him that the people of Malana will speak his language till it exists. Even today, the Malana people speak a language which is totally different from dialects of the neighbouring valley.

It is said that for several decades, the people in the adjoining areas had no knowledge about this valley. It was discovered by a hunter while he was hunting in the area. As the people of other parts of Kulu district came to know about it, they named it "Malana" which means "to join"

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Dharna and Protest March for the Restoration of Civil Liberties

(From our special correspondent)

Punjabi Sabhiachar Sabha, Punjab in collaboration with Kendri Panjabi Lekhak Sabha, Federation of Industries, Punjab and Indian Minorities and Dalit Front, Panjab staged a dharna at Punjabi Bhawan, Ludhiana on November 15, 1987 from 11 to 3 p.m. to demand the release of Jodhpur detenus, prosecution of all those indicated for the Sikh carnage of November, 1984 and stoppage of innocent killings by the unidentified persons and by the police in fake encounters.

About 150 writers and other intelligentsia who sat in dharna took out a procession from Punjabi Bhawan to the residence of Deputy Commissioner, Ludhiana shouting slogans against police repression and innocent killings.

Dr. S.S. Dosanj, President of Panjabi Sabhiachar Sabha, Panjab submitted the following memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner, Ludhiana for onward transmission to the Governor of Punjab. The memorandum was signed by Principal Sant Singh Sekhon, President, Kendri Panjabi Lekhak Sabha, S. Inderjit Singh, Pardhan, Federation of Industries, Panjab, Col. Chanan Singh Dhillon, Vice President, Indian Minorities and Dalit Front and Dr. S.S. Dosanj, President, Panjabi Sabhiachar Sabha, Panjab.

The Memorandum

The Punjab situation has been taking a turn for the worse in the recent past. Despite all claims by the authorities and noisy demonstrations of 'Shakti Sammelans' and 'Ekta Sammelans' there has hardly been a day when there has been a let-up in the gory drama of innocent killings.

We have been brought to this state of affairs by the apathy of the Central Government which has failed to implement the Rajiv-Longowal accord and created a political hiatus in the state. If it were merely a matter of political expediency one could understand the manoeuvring of the politicians in power and Prime Minister's masterly inactivity to stall a solution on one pretext or the other. It is clear as day that the Central Government is observing double standards and deliberately following a 'DUND NEETI' based upon wilful denial of democratic norms for redressing the legitimate grievances of the Punjabi people.

If it were not so, the Government would have released the Jodhpur detenus or at least brought them to trial and would not have given a communal colouring to the situation by branding every militant a Sikh 'Atankwadi'. Our Prime Minister has consistently refused to talk to the duly elected representatives of the Punjabi people. Instead, these representatives have been detained under draconian laws which do not have the sanction of the people but of a packed Parliament wherein the right of

dissent has been withheld by such laws as the anti-defection act.

It is under these circumstances that intellectuals, writers, lawyers, liberal democrats, social service oriented professionals had to come forward to bridge the gap even if it means getting caught between the firing ranges of the State and the militants.

It is the tragedy of post independence development in India that development plans have been divested of cultural objectives and a new elite class has to hold power, both in the centre and in the States. It is the old story of one group of elite vying with another for grabbing the spoils of political corruption. This elite has been ruling in the centre and in the states in the name of people and not for the people.

We, therefore, with all the emphasis and with all the earnestness at our command would like to bring it home to the authorities that be that it is high time the Government read the writing on the wall. If the authorities ignored the people and their legitimate interests, the people are bound to re-act.

We, therefore, demand that the rule of law be restored and the writ of democracy should be made to run again in our state and let their be new approach to problem based upon autonomy for different units of the Republic of India which has yet to be truly federal, truly democratic, truly secular and truly socialistic. The Prime Minister is in no mood on his own assertion to talk to political group of one party or the other. Let him remember that we will have to talk to history. We earnestly wish him to realise that the time is running short not only for him but for the nation as well. The choice before us intellectuals of all shades of opinion and professions is very clear that we want the unity of India and not the unification of India under pseudo-fascism masquerading as a democratic socialism. Now unity can be maintained only under true democratic structure of the country. Solution to Punjab Problem lies in granting autonomy to the States.

Punjab needs a healing touch which can be provided:—

1. by prosecuting all those who have been indicted by the People's Union for Democratic Rights and People's Union for Civil Liberties for killing the Sikhs in November 1984.
2. by releasing Jodhpur detenus immediately and granting general amnesty to all the persons arrested in connection with the Punjab Problem.
3. Central Government and Rajiv Gandhi in person should apologise for all the excesses committed against Punjab in general and the Sikhs in particular.
4. A judicial enquiry be instituted to investigate all the police encounters and police officials found guilty

of killing people in fake encounters should be arrested and tried in the court of law.

5. by announcing an immediate interim economic package and declaring Punjab as industrially backward state.

The Deputy Commissioner, Ludhiana accepted the memorandum with the assurance that it will be forwarded to the Government of Punjab.

Demand by Intelligentsia

A three-day Seminar on Panjab Problem organised by the Department of Journalism, PAU, Ludhiana in collaboration with Institute for Development Education, Madras from November 20 to 22, 1987 at Panjabi Bhawan, Ludhiana, suggested that.

The solution to the Panjab Problem lies in the unconditional release of the Jodhpur and other detenus compensating them amply for the undue torture they had to suffer; prosecuting all those who were held responsible for the November killing of 1984 by different voluntary investigating agencies; stopping fake encounters by the police and innocent killings by a group of militants and granting autonomy to all States by amending the constitution to realise a true federal structure in the country.

Eminent scholars to the stature of Mr. S.K. De, Mr. Balraj Puri, Prof. Surinder Singh Narula, Mr. Jaswant Singh Kanwal, Dr. S.S. Dosanj and dignitaries like Inderjit Singh, President, Federation of Industries, Punjab, Col. C.S. Dhillon, Vice-President, Indian Minorities and Dalit Front, Le. Col. (Retd.) H.S. Kahlon and about fifty intelligentsia and students took part in deliberations.

The consensus of the Seminar was that Punjab Problem was basically a political and economic issue made deliberately a religious tangle. Participants unanimously blamed the Central Government for its wrong policies and discriminatory treatment to the minorities in general and Sikhs in particular. They also strongly felt that for depriving Jodhpur detenus and many other prisoners, the basic human rights and civil liberties the whole nation should feel ashamed of. They were of the view that dealing with the issue of massacre of November 1984, the Central Government has not only violated the constitution but has blatantly alienated the Sikh community also. The prosecution of the indicated persons should not be the concern of the Sikhs only, all the peace loving democratic organisations should work for it and in the process protect the constitution, civil liberties and human rights.

Committee for Dialogue on Punjab offered its platform for

the follow-up action of the findings of the Seminar. An Action Committee was constituted with Mr. Balraj Puri and Dr. S.S. Dosanj as co-conveners to organise a democratic movement in collaboration with other democratic organisations

working for peace and civil liberties to stop fake encounters and innocent killings in Punjab. The seminarists were of the view that Punjabi identity must be recognised to achieve the much desired autonomy for the State.

Year Long Campaign in Delhi to Educate Motorists About Auto Exhaust Pollution

Death is coming from the highways, said Shri Jag Parvesh Chandra, Chief Executive Councillor, highlighting the danger posed by the air pollution created by the exhausts from auto-mobiles in Delhi. He said, the number of automobiles in Delhi roads has swelled from a more 17,000 in 1951 to about 12 lakhs today and every year 1 lakh more vehicle are being registered in Delhi.

Shri Chandra was inaugurating a Seminar on 'Conservation Day' as a part of the National Integration Week Celebrations in the Capital.

Shri Chandra informed the participants at the Seminar that Delhi Administration is launching a year long

educational campaign for motorists from December, 1987 wherein besides multi media publicity for creating awareness about Air Pollution, the motorists and scooter drivers would be provided facilities at Petrol Pumps to get their vehicles checked for the level of pollution from vehicle exhaust and get the defects rectified. This would, while reduce pollution to the minimum, also give them better mileage per unit of fuel and lengthen the life of the vehicle.

Eminent scientists and conservationists also participated in the Seminar. From IIT Delhi Prof. H.B. Mathur's talk was also supported by slide shows and demonstrations.

Activities of Companies Functioning in Union Territory of Delhi

It has been informed by the Registrar of Companies (Delhi & Haryana) that 280 Private Limited Companies with a total authorised capital of Rs.10,85,80,000 and 7 Public Limited Companies with a total authorised capital of Rs.43,50,00,000 incorporated in the Union Territory of Delhi during the month of August 1987, 18 Private Limited Companies with a total authorised capital of Rs.1,33,50,000 were incorporated in the State of Haryana. During the month 14 Public Limited Companies with a total authorised capital of Rs.2,91,00,000 have shifted their registered offices from the State of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Calcutta to the Union territory of Delhi.

Total number of companies at work as on 31.3.87 in the Union Territory of Delhi was 24806 with a total authorised capital of Rs.16,79,46,61,054 and paid up capital of Rs.1,12,36,40,48,617 and in the

State of Haryana the total number of Companies at work was 1260 with a total authorised capital of Rs.7,86,74,53,000 and paid up capital of Rs.4,62,08,97,315.

During the month under review 158 complaints against 73 companies and their Directors having their registered office in the Union Territory of Delhi and 4 complaints against 2 companies and their Directors having their registered offices in the State of Haryana were filed in the Courts defaults committed under the Companies Act, 1956 165 cases in respect of 84 Companies having their registered offices in the Union Territory of Delhi and 1 case in respect of company having its registered office in the State of Haryana was disposed off by the Courts and a total fine of Rs.98,325 was imposed on the Companies and their Directors. Total cost awarded to the registrar of Companies was Rs.620.50.

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Tribal Democracy

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(the village which has joined the others).

The "Jamlu Devta" in the valley is considered as the "protector" of the local people. The wooden structure temple of the village signifies his presence as there is no statue or idol available to identify him. However, innumerable symbols of the "Devta" in the form of golden and silver horses, deers, narsingha, karnal, naggra-dhol and sticks are housed in the temple.

The local people claim that no outsider has ever seen their God nor will they allow a non-resident to see him. The entry of visitors is banned in the temple area.

The offerings to the "Devta" are deposited in the village treasury. However, no account of the money in the treasury is maintained. A needy person can take some money or silver from it without any counting. The treasury is believed to have

huge quantities of gold and silver.

While the village has a school and an ayurvedic dispensary, it requires a motorable road, electricity, piped water, better health services and schemes for development of agriculture, animal husbandry and weaving industry.

At present, it is approached through four paths on foot, passing over two narrow passes, heavy boulders, thick woods and bushes, winding along the rivers and difficult terrain, both steep and tough.

The village remains snow-bound and cut off from the rest of the world for six months in a year. The local people are tall, fair and sharp-featured and simple. They mainly wear woolen cloths and animal skins.

Indian currency and other coins are rarely in use in the valley because of prevalent barter or exchange system of trade.

Guru Gobind Singh

Continued from page 7

demned. All PANTHI SAGAL JAMATI, says Guru Nanak in Japji Sahib. "Manas ki jaat sabhe eke pechanbo", says Guru Gobind Singh, who was born in Patna, (Bihar) who left the World in Nanded (Maharashtra) and who spent his life in Punjab. Guru Gobind Singh gave us the whole world as KHALISTAN and we foolishly and violently hope to create narrow homes, narrow minds, narrow areas. And I fear that if ever KHALISTAN came about the KHALSA WILL ALWAYS BE QUARRELLING AMONG THEMSELVES.

I ask straight questions. Are we entitled to call ourselves Sikhs if we do not adhere to the definition in Guru Granth Sahib: "Gur Satgur ka jo Sikh akhaye, bhalke uth harinam dhyaye..... (the whole shabad). Then I ask another one: Are we entitled to be known as Khalsa in the definition that Guru Gobind Singh gave:

Khalsa mero roop ha khas, Khalse mein haun karoun nivas... Khalsa mera satgur poora, Khalsa mera sajan soora.

The Guru says that only the one in whose heart the Lord's LIGHT always shines can be called Khalsa, otherwise he is impure. Can we be called Khalsa when we kill innocent people in the name of Sikhism, or when we keep quiet out of fear or hatred for others in view of the atrocities committed against Sikhs? Can we be called Khalsa if we make a mess of our gurdwaras, when we allow the misuse of Gurdwaras, abdicate our responsibilities, quarrel among ourselves and abuse each other making a fool of ourselves?

How to Protest

Let me repeat: BY ALL MEANS RESIST THE WRONG EVEN AT THE

COST OF YOUR LIFE. NEVER SUBMIT TO THE WRONG. NEVER COMPROMISE WITH THE INSOLENT MIGHT. I shall never forget the Operation Bluestar, the Woodrose, November 1984 riots, continued incarceration of Jodhpur detenus, BUT I SHALL NEVER ADVOCATE EVEN ONE WRONG BEING DONE TO JUSTIFY MY PROTEST. I SHALL NEVER SUGGEST KILLING OF ONE INNOCENT PERSON IN SUPPORT OF MY PROTEST. Guru Gobind Singh gave us **Mala** and **Kirpan**, former to keep our internal purity but not become so weak and dead that any tyrant could over-run us. The Kirpan was there to defend the weak and tyrannised. But then the **Mala** was there to see that our **Kirpan** never became tyrant. Today we are in a topsy-turvy world of Khalsa.

Guru Gobind Singh beckons to you, O Khalsa. Hark now. The only way to get out of your present frightened, compromising mood is to come back on the rails of Khalsa way of life:

- 1) JAGAT JOT JAPE NIS BASAR (Let the light of the Lord burn in you day and night)
- 2) Resist tyranny by suffering and, if necessary, by violence strictly against those who commit violence against you and NOT against innocent people.
- 3) Live in purity away from dishonesty.
- 4) Shun drinking and other evil habits like lustful interest in other women and others' wealth.
- 5) Embrace the whole world for the entire humanity is one.

Imagine what the GURU said about his Khalsa. IN HI KI KRIPA KE SAJE HAM HAIN, NAHTN MOE SO GARIB KARORE PARE (I have become something with their grace, otherwise crores of poor men

Communal amity begins on campus

Students from half a dozen Delhi University colleges and as many schools in the walled city are silently evolving a novel approach to fight communalism. They are trying to foster the spirit of communal harmony through cultural programmes, picnics and cricket tournaments.

But it is more than mere play and fun. The programme has participation of youth from different communities, which naturally removes their suspicions and inhibitions vis-a-vis each other, interspersed with regular discussions on how to prevent a communal riot, and, in case it breaks out, how to contain it. The handful of teachers, who acted as a catalyst in this novel experiment begun barely two years ago, already see the emergence of volunteers from various communities committed to safeguarding communal harmony.

The Genesis

The genesis of the idea is indeed interesting. The university has a National Service Scheme (NSS) with a unit in almost each of the 50-odd colleges. There are funds for these units, which have generally been utilised in organising seminars and exposing the students to village life, encouraging them to do

like me are rotting.) Imagine also his love for his creation; he himself became a **chela** to establish a joint Guru-Sikh equal relation ship. BUT DO NOT FORGET THE WARNING HE LEFT, along with the assurance;

JABLAG KHALSA RAHE NIARA, TABLAG TEJ DION MEIN SARA
JAB EK GAHE BIPRIN KI REET, MEIN NA KAROUN INKI PARTIT

(So long as the Khalsa remains SPECIAL in its purity and truthful conduct—I shall

social service help in construction of some village roads, clean up the college premises etc.

The co-ordinator of one of the many NSS units organised in February last year a discussion on communalism. Teams of four students each, drawn from different religious communities, participated in a day-long discussion on why communal violence breaks out and how people should intervene to check its spread. With the teachers mildly directing the college students towards evolving an action plan in the light of the consensus that emerged at the discussion, came forth the idea that some schools in the walled city be adopted to encourage mixed social activity among students.

Through such activity, which is in any case closer to the heart of the youth rather than dull speeches of leaders of various hues at many a seminar, the youth in the walled city could be actively associated. It was a strategy evolved by them to check in their own way the disturbing growth of communalism.

Beginning with the debate in February '86, the walled city's school students, under the aegis of the NSS have by now had cultural programmes, picnics and a cricket tournament. The college

lend all my strength to them; when they get into brahmanical rituals, I SHALL NOT STAND BY THEM).

There is no need to stress that if others have brought us to the present shameful existence, we have, by our own conduct away from the Guru's commands, lost the Guru's backing. But, SIMAR MURIDA DHADIA, SATGUR BAKHSHINDA (O devotee, remember the Guru, He is always forgiving.) My humble plea, therefore, is:

Hark, hark even now, Khalsa. Guru beckons to you: ●

students, and the teachers, have been making frequent visits to the schools, and, in the process of fun and frolic, the otherwise segregated lives of the walled city youth has been replaced by a more trusting relationship between the young from different communities.

Communication Gap

"But is there really as much of segregation between communities in the walled city as to prevent normal interaction between the young ones?"

In reply to this, of the teachers associated with the project said, "of the six or seven schools we have been working with some have Urdu as the medium of instruction in morning and Hindi in the evening. There is little interaction not only among the students but the teachers as well. While it is encouraging that there are many a student and teacher from both the communities who feel concerned about the communication gap between the two communities, it saddens one to see that there is not much interaction between them."

He went on "As far as we are concerned, some of the teachers and students in the walled city respond to us positively, partly because we happen to be from the university. **Times of India**

tremendous suppressive efforts, has failed to achieve in the last 18 months. In fact, these misguided methods have proved counter-productive and have increased anguish and bitterness amongst the people. On the other hand, this peaceful Satyagraha would have more successfully isolated the extremists in the Punjab and enabled the moderated to come forward and re-establish their influence amongst the public. It would have also brought both the communities together, as religious leaders from both the communities would have sat together and persuaded the people to develop mutual understanding and regard.

Lastly, is it fair and equitable when protest rallies and demonstrations from all other communities and parties are freely permitted at the Boat Club, this laudable effort by Prof. Darshan Singh has been brutally thwarted? One cannot help wondering why even constructive steps to improve the present deplorable situation in the Punjab are being forcibly prevented. Could it be that Government wants to keep the Punjab pot boiling till the next election for an electoral advantage? I hope not. The recent debacle in Haryana State elections should be a lesson.

I once again appeal to the members of the House to raise their voice against the repressive and undemocratic measures being adopted by the Government to smother the voice of a minority fighting for human rights by peaceful means.

General Aurora Opposes Prof. Darshan Singh's House Arrest

Lt. General J.S. Aurora (retd.) M.P. made a special mention in the Rajya Sabha on 9 Dec. 1987 condemning the house arrest of Prof. Darshan Singh. He said I wish to draw the attention of this august House to the reprehensible action of the Punjab Government to place Prof. Darshan Singh under house arrest to prevent his peace march to Delhi on the 4th December 1987.

I also wish to appeal against the objectionable steps taken by the Central Government to prevent a peaceful **dharna** at the Boat Club here on the 5th December to voice the demands of the Sikh community in collaboration with the other religious leaders and communities. The demands are for punishing the guilty of the November 1984 carnage,

release of the innocent detenus incarcerated in the Jodhpur jail since June 1984 for over 3½ years, rehabilitation of those army men who had acted under religious emotional stress in June 1984 and, lastly, for stopping the killing of innocent persons in fake encounters in Punjab.

Sir, all these demands are based on human rights and the **dharna** would have been absolutely peaceful, non-political and within the law of the land. It has support of all right-thinking people, political parties and many of the religious and social organisations. Religious leaders from Hardwar were going to join the 'dharna' with Prof. Darshan Singh.

This effort would have achieved by persuasion what the Government, in spite of its

India-Sri Lanka

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In all the previous negotiations the issue was how Sri Lanka Tamils could ask Trincomalee and Amparai to join the Northern Province. Batticaloa has no contiguity with the North. True, at one time the Tamils were in a majority there. True also that successive Sri Lankan Government especially Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike's SLFP have pursued a cynical and ruthless policy of settling Sinhalese on Tamil lands.

Understanding on the Interim Administrative Council. The official announcement made on September 29 was on the lines already agreed. On September 30 the LTTE backed out. It insisted on the appointment as Chairman of the Council of one who was not only too junior for the post but had been detained earlier for helping the LTTE. In short, the LTTE wanted a pliable Chairman through whom to run the Council and govern the two provinces before and during the elections. Had it not overplayed its hands, it might have by the sheer fact of its dominance of the Council been in a position to influence the poll and come to power to cock a snook at New Delhi and Colombo alike.

According to the Government of India itself, the LTTE "had masterminded the killings of over 600 rival Tamil militant cadres." Yet, there are those in the country who would like New Delhi to make up with the LTTE.

Is the analogy with Bangladesh far fetched?

Not in regard to our conduct in training the militants or in the conformism of the press. One of our ablest and most senior publicists wrote recently:

"It is amazing that the government had no arsement whatever of LTTE's strength, attitude and having approach delute the fact that for four long years its agencies were handling LTTE and outor Tamil groups" He contested this with the "close effort with the Mukti Bahimi of Bangladesh" another RAW creation, and blamea Rajiv Gandhi for the mess. He might have fairly added Mrs. Gandhi's name as well and that of her man Friday G. Parthasarathy.

The Commentator isequally unfair wherein he writes that New Delhi had no "inkling of the LTTE mood". Do you need to know the changes in the mood of a body like the LTTE? No. New Delhi thought it could tame the Bhindranwale of Sri Lanka. As in the Punjab so in Sri Lanka, the Frankenstein refused to obey. It is unlikely that the lessons have yet been learnt.

The worst is not yet over. It is not the devolution package but the referendure which will pose a challenge. When the East votes not to join the north, there will be a big sense of defeat.

The Population

The population figures are most relevant. The Census of March 1981 placed Sri Lanka's at 14,350,001, of which the Sinhalese constituted 73.98 per cent, Sri Lanka Tamils 12.6 per cent, Tamils of Indian origin 5.56 percent, Muslims (a majority of whom speak Tamil) constitute 7.12 percent and the Malays Burghers (of Portuguese and Dutch ancestry) comprise the rest. We are concerned with the Sri Lankan Tamils. They constitute 86 per cent of the population of the Northern Province which has four districts, one of them being Jaffna. The Eastern Province has three districts Trincomalee, adjoining the Northern Province; Batticaloa which adjoins Trincomalee in the South and, below the two, Amparai. In the Eastern Province as a whole the Tamils are about 41 per cent of the population. Hence the objection to the referendum. Consider the figures district-wise in terms of per centage of total pupulation ignoring small

groups:-

In all the previous negotiations the issue was how Sri Lanka Tamils could ask Trincomalee and Amparai to join the Northern Province. Batticaloa has no contiguity with the North. True, at one time

the Tamils were in a majority there. True also that successive Sri Lankan Government especially Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike's SLFP have pursued a cynical and ruthless policy of settling Sinhalese on Tamil lands.

But in the eighties, for whatever historical reasons, the position is as alone. The East's refusal to join the north is a nere certainty what infact will that have on Indo-Sri Lanka relations and on the Tamils can well beimagined.



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India and Sri Lanka

A.G. Noorani

The time has come to rise above the immediate events and view our role in Sri Lanka in perspective. During all the last four hectic years in Indo-Sri Lankan relations, since the ethnic conflict erupted in 1983 in a most virulently violent form on the island, few in this country have cared to define the Indian interest in the conflict and its resolution. It has been unthinkingly assumed that there was only one interest—to secure a fair deal for the Tamils there; that is, the Sri Lanka Tamils who number 1,871,535 and are 12.6 per cent of the population, as distinct from the Indian Tamils who number 825,233 and constitute 5.56 per cent of the population.

This objective was only partially sound. There was a distortion of this objective and a total neglect of another equally worthwhile objective. The distortion was the concentration on the Sri Lankan Tamils in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Nearly one third of the Sri Lankan Tamils live outside these provinces. They comprise 4.5 per cent of the population in the Sinhalese-majority areas though in the Colombo and Gampaha districts they are as many as 10 per cent of the population. In building up a Tamil "homeland" in the two provinces, did we give any thought "the minority-problem" we were creating there as well as elsewhere in Sri Lanka? surely the Tamils have to live in the Sinhalese in one Sri Lanka.

The Objectives

There was one way out to avoid this distortion of the first objective. It was by pursuing the other objective which is as valid, as imperative and necessary to serve India's interests as the protection of the harried Tamils. It is a friendly Sri Lanka or, if you like, the goodwill of the majority community, the Sinhalese.

The second objective has been totally sacrificed. First, by the Indira Gandhi-G. Parthasarathy style of diplomacy. Next, after a decent interval 1985-1986, to be fair-by Rajiv Gandhi's abrasive style.

During this entire phase 1983-1987, partisanship led New Delhi to connive at the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister the hideously egotistic M.G. Ramachandran's misdoings. All this, to keep his rival M. Karunanidhi at bay. MGR took the LTTE under his wings. The results are there for all to see. We did not connive, we consciously built up Tamil militant groups on our soil and armed them. On this, bairing a few exceptions, the press was silent as it was during the Bangladesh crisis. Foreign critics are not wrong when they say that our press may be free but on foreign policy it is conformist.

Distrustful

At the end of 1987, after all these years of Indian effort and recently loss of

Indian blood and money, we have a Sri Lanka which is distrustful; the Sinhalese alienated; and the Tamils disenchanted and afraid.

Given the Indian buildup of the murderous fascist LTTE there was a worse alternative—the LTTE in power. It is still not ruled out. But lest this description of the LTTE seem unfair, let me quote Cho Ramaswamy on it. He has been almost unique in keeping a cool head and consistently talking sense on a subject which has led very many to leave their senses. He wrote in *The Telegraph* on August 21, 1987.

"Pirabhakaran had never really been with the people. He is a declared fascist, who has repeated again and again that he is not a believer in democracy, and that in his scheme for Eelam there would be a one-party rule—his party's rule. The Tamils, hounded out by the Sri Lankan Army, had to look to somebody for some kind of a fortification and with almost all the other militant groups getting wiped out by Pirabhakaran, they had no other alternative except to seek his protection. Also, the LTTE men mercilessly killed civilian Tamils who refused to cooperate with them, and submit themselves. Pirabhakaran never won the hearts of the Tamils but he did win their submission by threats. That is why even when he addressed the meeting of the Tamils after the settlement, he had to be protected by not less than 15 of his gunmen."

Who created him? We, of course. As Cho Ramaswamy remarked, "Pirabhakaran has been pampered enough in India. In fact, it was the immense help received in India—particularly from the Tamil Nadu government—which made it possible for Pirabhakaran to wipe out the other militant groups and to project himself as the most important leader of the Tamils. Further events would show that by helping Pirabhakaran to do all this, India has done great injustice to the Sri Lankan Tamils. The Indian Government realised its mistake and the present agreement is the result."

Appeasing Pirabhakaran

To think that even after the Rajiv Gandhi-Jayawardene accord this very man and his LTTE were offered seven out of 12 seats in the Interim Advisory Council. That included its Chairman, the Chief Administrator of the two provinces. The other four would have been drawn from TULF (2) and Sinhalese (2). It is the Administrator-in-Council who would have had responsibility for maintaining law and order in the two provinces in the north and east of the island.

The Agreement

The Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement was signed on July 29. On September 27-28 was signed the Indo-

The Commentator is equally unfair when he writes that New Delhi had no "inkling of the LTTE mood". Do you need to know the changes in the mood of a body like the LTTE? No. New Delhi thought it could tame the Bhindranwale of Sri Lanka. As in the Punjab so in Sri Lanka, the Frankenstein refused to obey. It is unlikely that the lessons have yet been learnt.

LTTE Accord. Following a letter of basic acceptance dated September 27, 1987 signed by the LTTE leader Prabhakaran himself and addressed to the Indian High Commissioner J.N. Dixit, the Accord in the form of

District	Sinhalese	S.L. Tamils	Muslim	Indian Tamils
Trincomalee	33.6	33.8	29	2.6
Batticaloa	3.2	70.8	24	1.1
Amparai	37.6	20.1	41.6	0.4

Agreed Minutes was signed on September 28 by his deputy Mathaiya and H.S. Puri, First Secretary (Political) in the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka. It was an accord for co-operation, arms surrender, demilitarisation and clear dominance of the LTTE in the Interim Advisory Council. Pirabhakaran agreed to "fully co-operate in the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement" in the context, however, of Rajiv Gandhi's assurances to him.

For all our one-sidedness, no one accuses Jayawardene of not abiding by the

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